Daily Report

Latin America

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FBIS-LAT-94-051 *16 March 1994*

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NOTICE TO READERS: Effective immediately, all items published in the Latin America DAILY REPORT are also disseminated in electronic form.
An Ω indicates a Foreign Media Note.

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Southern Cone Agriculture Ministers Meet

PY1503220694 Montevideo EL OBSERVADOR ECONOMICO in Spanish 25 Feb 94 Agricultural Section p 3

[Text] The agriculture ministers of Brazil, Paraguay, Argentina, Chile, and Uruguay—Sinval Guazelli, Raul Torres, Felipe Sola, Juan Figueroa, and Pedro Saravia, respectively—on 24 February held the sixth ministerial meeting of Conasur [Southern Cone Consultative Council for Cooperation in the Farm Sector] and the fourth meeting of the Animal and Plant Health Committee (Cosave).

During the deliberations, which were held at the Uruguayan Mercantile Chamber of Products headquarters, the ministers worked on coordination of matters linked with farm policies, production, and commerce.

Figueroa said that "there was some turbulence because of delays in the integration movement," adding that this caused a delay in the meetings of top agricultural officials. This meeting, he went on, is particularly significant because technicians and ministers "have reached total consensus on the health agreement for the exchange of animals and farm products."

Figueroa emphasized the "great importance" of the agreement that was reached for Southern Cone countries because of the progress involved in the harmonization of sanitary policies by Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Chile, and Uruguay. The ministers also pointed to the need to impose tighter controls on the admission of subsidized products to the region.

The resolution by the five ministers confirms the methodology used for "harmonizing health procedures to facilitate the international commerce of animals and farm products in Conasur countries."

The resolution sets forth that "health conditions" will be imposed for the admission of cattle and farm products in commerce between Conasur countries and with third countries. The document approved by the ministers states that the objective is to preserve animal health conditions in the region and each country.

The priorities picked up by the Regional Animal Health Committee (Coresa) also were ratified. The priorities seek to harmonize, strengthen, and improve an emergency system for high-risk disease.

Among other decisions made on 24 February is the adoption of "new techniques" that will regulate the exchange of farm, fish, and industrial products. Among such products are crude sugar, fresh fish, canned fish, canned tuna, UHT [ultrahigh temperature] milk, butter oil or anhydrous milk grease, yogurt, packing material, food processing equipment, cream, and cheese.

Figueroa emphasized that Conasur is a clearly operational organization in light of the "relative success" of the Uruguay Round of GATT talks, noting that the strengthening of international trade is based on regional agreements, which are "a powerful lever for promoting this wealth-generating activity."

He said the process through which the region is going gives rise to "new problems that we must resolve. The fact that we negotiate on friendly terms creates fraternal ties between countries, and matters that previously were difficult to analyze and resolve—the foreign ministries had to intervene—are today rapidly solved with a phone call."

Cuba

Exclusion From Summit of Americas Criticized

PA1603000294 Havana Radio Havana Cuba in Spanish 0000 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Commentary by Roberto Morejon from the "Evening Information Review" newscast]

[Text] With the alleged purpose of collectively defending democracy and promoting economic growth while advancing on a strategy of sustained development, the United States will hold a so-called Summit of the Americas in Miami, Florida. According to the official announcement made by President William Clinton himself, the meeting will be held in early December with the conspicuous absence of an invitation to the Cuban Government.

The meeting will call for the creation of a mechanism capable of promoting George Bush's so-called Initiative for the Americas which seeks to open new inroads for U.S. capital and for filling the gap that—for obvious reasons—the United States cannot fill by way of the Ibero-American Summits. Through a consensus of the participants, the three Ibero-American Summits reached common stands on certain issues based on mutual respect and the sovereign rights of each nation. By virtue of its own right and by invitation of the organizers, Cuba has attended these Ibero-American Summits. This has disturbed the power brokers in the United States who insist on isolating the Cuban Government.

The U.S. authorities are highlighting the fact that Cuba has been excluded from the Summit of the Americas guest list. No one should be deceived as to the not-so-secret purposes of giving the meeting a certain anti-Cuban flavor when economic issues of the utmost interest to Washington are scheduled to be discussed. We must not forget that challenges to maintaining the U.S. blockade against the island are growing in Congress, the executive branch, political institutions, the press, and other spheres of U.S. society. Those who advocate tightening the blockade do not like the steps taken by Cuba and its neighbors on the subcontinent to establish commercial ties that are mutually advantageous and encourage investments by Latin American entrepreneurs on the island.

The venue for the so-called Summit of the Americas is very suggestive. Naturally, one becomes very suspicious of the fact that the city of Miami was selected, because this is a city where extreme right-wing Cuban immigrants still control powerful media outlets. We will wait and see what the definite agenda of the Miami meeting, which will be discussed when Vice President Al Gore visits the region, will be. It will not be easy for him to find support for anti-Cuban maneuvers, if this is one of his goals.

Caribbean Basin Integration Includes Havana

FL1603031694 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 Mar 94

[Text] Tomorrow in Jamaica, experts from 38 Caribbean Basin countries will begin forming an integration organization that intends to create a free-trade zone in the area. This will include Cuba, the organizers of the forum announced. The work group will discuss, in Kingston, Jamaica, the document structuring the planned association of Caribbean nations, the first of its kind and one that will include all the area's countries.

The organization will bring together the nations of the Caribbean Basin or those with a Caribbean coast, to form a bloc of nations ranging from small, agriculture-exporting nations to countries such as Colombia, Mexico, and Venezuela. It will be a conglomerate of 205 million inhabitants, with a joint gross national product of $6 billion and a commercial flow of $2 billion a year.

Castro Congratulates Nation's Reporters

FL1503185894 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Excerpt] Commander in Chief Fidel Castro sent a congratulatory message to all reporters of Cuba on the occasion of Cuban Media Day, which was instituted two years ago on the 100th anniversary of Jose Marti's founding of PATRIA newspaper. The message was read by Jose Ramon Balaguer during the closing of the Union of Cuban Journalists plenum. [passage omitted]

Robaina, Cambodian Foreign Minister Meet

FL1503193094 Havana Radio Rebelde Network in Spanish 1800 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] Today, the foreign ministers of Cuba and Cambodia ratified the strong and friendly ties between the two nations and expressed that they are in favor of extending the ties of cooperation in all possible areas, especially the economy.

During his meeting with his Cambodian counterpart Norodom Sirivut, who is currently acting as the head of government, Cuban Foreign Minister Roberto Robaina reiterated the friendly ties that unite the two nations. Robaina also stated that his visit to Cambodia marks a new stage in bilateral relations and concurred with his counterpart in the hope of promoting an atmosphere of cooperation on economic and trade issues as well as updating the existing agreements between the two states.

Tomorrow, Cuban Foreign Minister Robaina will meet with Chea Sim, the acting head of state and president of Cambodia's National Assembly. Prior to his departure for India, the next stop of his tour, Robaina will hold a news conference.

Stress Economic Accord

FL1603005194 Havana Cuba Vision Network in Spanish 2320 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] The foreign ministers of Cuba and Cambodia today reaffirmed the profound ties of friendship between their two countries and spoke in favor of expanding ties of cooperation in all spheres where it may be possible to do so, especially economics.

During the official talks, Prince Norodom Sirivut, younger brother of King Norodom Sihanouk, reiterated that ties of friendship unite Cambodia with Cuba. The premier [title as heard] also emphasized his government's unalterable position that condemns the economic, trade, and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States for over 30 years.

Robaina expressed satisfaction at finding himself in a Cambodia that is right in the middle of a process of national reconciliation and that is busy rebuilding the country, supported by the new climate of political stability achieved already last year.

Caravan Members Visit Santiago de Cuba

FL1503143294 Havana Tele Rebelde and Cuba Vision Networks in Spanish 0100 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] Five groups of members of the third U.S.-Cuban Caravan of Friendship are visiting several Cuban provinces. At 1030 this morning, 31 members of the caravan, including the Reverend Lucius Walker, arrived in Santiago de Cuba. Their arrival was welcomed in this way [cheers heard in background] and it couldn't have been any different.

For the first time, caravan members are visiting several provinces. According to the Rev. Walker, the group had to be divided. He said that everyone wanted to visit Santiago de Cuba.

[Begin Walker recording, in English with superimposed translation into Spanish] We had a little revolution among us, and of course we won; therefore, it is our privilege to be here with you. [end recording]

Speaking on behalf of Cuba, Politburo member Esteban Lazo Hernandez said:

[Begin Lazo recording] We embrace you wholeheartedly and greet you on behalf of all the people of Santiago de Cuba. [end recording]

Jose Marti's mausoleum was the first place they visited, but the historical heritage and a cemetery like this have prompted a longer visit. They also toured several parts of the city: Antonio Maceo Revolution Square, then Cespedes Park. A group of citizens who were aware of their visit was waiting for them. [cheers and shouts]

At the municipal government building, Mayor (Luis Estruch) welcomed Walker, who received the city's coat of arms on behalf of the group. In the afternoon, the Siboney minifarm and the 26 de Julio school were included in their agenda.

This caravan will be in Santiago de Cuba until next Wednesday. For a province with so many things to show, the agenda is rather tight and cannot be extended because of the tiring trip. Members of the caravan said, however, that they had rested sufficiently on the first day to continue.

Sugar Harvest Check Held in Granma Province

FL1603005994 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2032 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] With the slightest advantage over the eastern provinces, the nation's central provinces achieved the best performance in sugarcane harvest and recovery tasks in the first 10 days of March. This was reported at the meeting held in Bayamo to check the progress of that economic sphere. Central Cuba's sugar agroindustrial complexes obtained superior results in yield, base 96 [not further identified], and in reducing electrical energy consumption, while they tied with those of the east in recovery and amount of sugar produced.

The agroindustrial complexes of western Cuba headed sugar recovery, making the best use of installed capabilities and cane planting.

The progress check for the first 10 days of the harvest in March, which was held in Bayamo, Granma Province, was presided over by Nelson Torres, minister of the Sugar Industry, and Jose Naranjo, chief of the team for coordination and support of the commander in chief.

Roundup of Criminal, Judicial Action

FL1503220894

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of fileworthy reports on criminal activity and related judicial actions in Cuba carried on Havana radio and television in Spanish between 26 February and 9 March.

Radio Rebelde at 1255 GMT on 26 February reports that the Havana National Revolutionary Police arrested members of two gangs, most in their teens, who had been stealing from homes and stores in Nuevo Vedado and Alamar. These individuals comprised three organized groups of thieves who stole bicycles and other items. Before entering a house they observed it to determine the residents' goods and schedules. They operated mainly at dawn while the inhabitants slept. Most of the stolen bicycles have been recovered by the police.

Radio Progreso at 1200 GMT on 28 February reports on arrests in connection with 32,000 liters of milk, worth over 8,000 pesos at the official price, missing from the Beatriz milk pasteurizing plant which belongs to the Havana City Metropolitan Milk Products Enterprise in Arroyo Naranjo Municipality. At least nine persons benefited from this illegal activity: the head of the

distribution and sales department, an accountant, an office worker, and a driver from the factory and two clerks and three administrators from milk distribution points in Diez de Octubre Municipality. They admitted to having falsified distribution documents in complicity with the employees of the milk-selling units. "In their confessions, those incriminated said they sold the milk at prices far higher than those set by the laws of the state." "This crime shows the lack of scruples of the accused, who stole milk earmarked mainly for feeding children solely so they could enjoy a living standard far higher than their real possibilities. At the present, when the state is employing important resources to guarantee the population's food supply, in our society there still exist people who, to satisfy their appetites for material goods, are capable of stealing foods earmarked for the population." The people involved will be charged with misappropriation. "According to the penal code, whoever appropriates state property of considerable value entrusted to his care will be sanctioned by a prison term of from eight to 20 years."

Cuba Vision at 0100 GMT on 2 March reports that the National Revolutionary Police arrested a number of people for allegedly stealing 12,000 kg of polypropylene from a plastics factory in Havana and selling it on the black market. Some of the arrested were employees of the factory. Over 17,000 pesos were confiscated from one of the arrested.

Radio Rebelde Network at 1255 GMT on 9 March reports a recent attempt to steal and slaughter some oxen from the Santa Maria Cattle Farm, a Basic Cooperative Production Unit in Holguin. All the thieves were caught in the act and handed over to the police.

Nation To Go on 'Summer Time' on 2 Apr

FL1603010694 Havana Radio Reloj Network in Spanish 2039 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] The Electric Union of the Ministry of Basic Industry has announced that summer time will go into effect throughout Cuba on 2 April at midnight, at which time clocks will be set forward one hour. The main objective of this traditional measure is to take maximum advantage of the light of the sun. Official time will be reestablished on 9 October, at 0100, at which time clocks will be set back 60 minutes.

Haiti

Germany Temporarily Suspends Diplomatic Presence

PA1603023794 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0046 GMT 16 Mar 94

[Text] Port-au-Prince, 15 Mar (EFE)—The German Embassy in Port-au-Prince today announced it will temporarily suspend its diplomatic presence in Haiti beginning 31 March because of Haiti's ongoing political crisis. This decision was made, according to an official communique, because the situation "does not allow the normal functioning of bilateral cooperation between the two countries." The communique adds that Germany's interests in Haiti will be represented after 31 March by the German Consulate in Miami and that German humanitarian aid will continue to flow through nongovernment organizations and churches.

Germany has traditional ties with Haiti and is one of the principal countries to offer aid to this Caribbean country. This aid includes the installation of hydroelectric plants over the past few years, as well as agricultural infrastructure assistance and scholarships for professionals and students. The Haitian-German Institute has been operating for one year in Port-au-Prince and offers classes in German.

International Group in UN Opposes Sanctions

FL1503231694 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] The Group of Latin American and Caribbean countries, Grolacc, on 14 March, expressed to the UN Security Council its opposition to a resolution bill that would impose a total trade embargo on Haiti until democracy returns to the country. According to diplomatic sources, Grolacc's position received the support of several members of the Council, notably Spain, Nigeria, and Djibouti.

In a new attempt to harmonize the efforts of the international community, mediator Dante Caputo invited representatives of the four countries, the so-called Friends of Haiti—the United States, Canada, France, and Venezuela—to hold a high-level meeting on the Haitian question in New York on 17 or 18 March.

Aristide Demands Dismissal of Lt. Col. Francois

FL1503232894 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] The removal of General Cedras from the Army command is not sufficient for lifting the sanctions because [Lieutenant] Colonel Joseph Michel Francois is a torturer and can in no way be rewarded for his crimes, according to President Jean-Bertrand Aristide's spokesman, Jean-Claude Martineau, on 14 March. He called the plan by Haitian parliamentarians anticonstitutional and not in compliance with the Governors Island agreement. The plan contains nothing but flaws, Martineau explained.

[Begin Martineau recording, in Creole] Another refugee boat sank off the Bahamas. According to the latest reports, there may be another 50 deaths. In Miami, Daniel Buron has been assassinated. The Keep-an-Eye-on-Them Organization [Veye Yo] and the entire community of Little Haiti in Miami are in mourning. In Haiti, lawbreakers are sowing death.

Meanwhile, a plan is moving around the streets, promising to resolve the crisis like a magic wand. This plan does not comply with the country's Constitution. In addition, it does not comply with the Governors Island agreement, neither in what it says, nor in what it means to say. Since this plan came out, people have been hearing comments about it from time to time, but nobody has asked the Haitian people—who voted for the Constitution and who voted for President Aristide—what they think. So we, who are speaking on behalf of the president the people elected, think it would be good to recenter the ball:

1. When Gen. Cedras signed the Governors Island agreement, he did it on behalf of an institution called the Army.
2. The international community has imposed an embargo on Haiti because of the coup d'etat. So the embargo cannot be lifted if Gen. Cedras alone goes. The coup d'etat must be eradicated.
3. Lt. Col. Michel Francois has caused the deaths of many people in Haiti. He is not a soldier. He is a butcher. The Haitian people want justice. They do not want to reward him for his crimes.
4. The constitutional president is the head of the Army even though he is not directly in charge of it. The Army is not a state within the country.
5. It [not further identified] is so flawed that it allows people to say whatever they want. We want the international community to keep in mind that the crisis must be resolved in favor of democracy, not in favor of a coup d'etat. [end recording]

De Ronceray Calls for 'Mobilizing the Masses'

FL1503220794 Port-au-Prince Signal FM Radio in French 1130 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Excerpt] Mobilization for National Development leader Hubert de Ronceray, who participated in this weekend's meeting at the Visa Lodge Hotel, has proposed mobilizing the masses to force parliament to appoint a new president to fill the presidential vacuum. De Ronceray hopes that a government of national union will be formed. [passage omitted]

Deputies Open Office, Promote Settlement Plan

FL1603002994 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1145 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] The legislators are trying to sell the plan for resolving the crisis to the population. In Jacmel, a first step was taken by the president of the lower chamber, Frantz Robert Morde, who presented the plan to the population there. He did so during the inauguration of an information and communication office for the Southeast deputies and their constituents. Our correspondent in Jacmel, Pierre Nazon Beauliere, filed a report:

[Begin Beauliere recording, in Creole] On Sunday, 13 March, Deputy Frantz Robert Monde, president of the Chamber of Deputies, inaugurated a deputies' office in Jacmel, an office serving as part of a transmission network between the Chamber of Deputies and the voters in all the constituencies.

Following the inauguration ceremony, Deputy Joseph Lambert and Frantz Robert Monde met with the population at the Samba Night Club for a conference-debate on the topic: analysis of the current political situation, the settlement plan voted by the deputies, and its future. Agronomist Joseph Lambert, deputy of Jacmel's first constituency, presented an analysis of the plan, then outlined the current political situation with a retrospective dating from 7 February 1986. The deputy assessed the eight years since the overthrow of Jean-Claude [Duvalier], during which 12 governments have come and gone, with the country regressing further and further. Deputy Lambert strongly criticized the seven months of Father Aristide's presidency.

The president of the House of Deputies, Frantz Robert Monde, presented the crisis settlement plan called the Legislators' Plan. Deputy Monde detailed the plan, stating that it came from President Aristide's laboratory and that it is not an American plan, as many people believe. Deputy Monde did not hesitate to criticize President Aristide, who he says rejected the plan while enjoying millions of dollars in the United States. Deputy Monde asserted that President Aristide never knows what he wants. Monde believes the entire world will soon realize that President Aristide does not want the crisis to be solved. Deputy Monde let it be known that he will not be a hostage of either Father Aristide or General Cedras. He stated that he is defending his country while being destroyed by an embargo. He advised that if within a month, this legislators' plan does not pass, they in the parliament will consider a Haitian solution for the crisis.

Senator Margaret Martin intervened to explain the reasons the senators made the decision to dismiss the office presided over by Sen. Firmin Jean-Louis. According to Sen. Martin, it was because Firmin never held a session. The Senate is blocked and the country is collapsing. She added that Sen. Firmin is spreading corruption in the Senate. She said he had offered her $130,000 and a diplomatic post abroad to resign.

Many people came to the news conference and asked questions. It had been a long time since the population of Jacmel had participated in such a conference. The population is not at all informed on the Haitian crisis.

Deputy Jose LaFrance, Rita Frederick Moncoeur, and Joseph Elisca Bomier attended this conference. Deputy Lambert had hired the band, Les Invincibles, to play in front of the building. Many people believe that this conference is a campaign for a second mandate that Deputy Joseph Lambert has begun.

Pierre Nazon Beauliere for Radio Metropole. [end recording]

ONIN Petition Supports Deputies' Plan

FL1503223594 Port-au-Prince Radio Metropole in French 1700 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Excerpt] The National Organization for the Defense of National Interests [ONIN], which came out publicly on 14 March, denounces the irresponsibility of Haitian leaders toward the crisis. The movement, which favors the lower chamber's plan, called on all the sectors of national life to reach a compromise for a solution to the crisis.

ONIN, which openly opposes foreign domination of the country's internal affairs, on 14 March launched a petition throughout the country seeking signatures to support the plan proposed by the deputies, a petition that the members of the organization intend to submit to Army Headquarters on 29 March, the anniversary date of the 1987 Constitution. The members of the National Organization for the Defense of National Interests met with the press on 14 March. [passage omitted]

Banamex Confirms Top Executive Kidnapped

PA1603020694 Mexico City Radio ACIR Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 Mar 94

[From the "ACIR Radio News" Newscast]

[Excerpt] You have probably already heard about this next report, although yesterday it was only a rumor. Nevertheless, the National Bank of Mexico [Banamex] confirmed the news at about 2315 on 14 March. I am referring to the kidnapping of Alfredo Harp Helu, president of the Banamex Stock and Securities Co. He is the president of the Administration Council of this important financial group, which is also known as Banamex Accival. Harp was kidnapped on 14 March in Coyoacan neighborhood just before 0800.

The Grand Marquis in which Harp and his chauffeur, Eliseo Ortiz, were traveling was apparently intercepted by three people; another report says as many as seven individuals may have been involved. The car was stopped at the intersection of Caballo Calco Street and Hidalgo Avenue across from Hidalgo Park, a few meters from the Coyoacan council building.

According to reports, Eliseo Ortiz was drugged and handcuffed by the criminals. Alfredo Harp, according to Banamex sources, did not resist the kidnappers. Harp was heading for his office on Madero Street in the historic center of Mexico City at 0800 on 14 March, where he was scheduled to have breakfast with other Banamex stockholders.

After the kidnapping, chauffeur Eliseo Ortiz received medical treatment at Angeles Hospital. The vehicle in which Harp was traveling, the Grand Marquis, was found at El Rosedal neighborhood, very close to where the crime was committed. The chauffeur, after receiving treatment at Angeles Hospital, was taken to Banamex headquarters on Madero Street, Mexico City, where he was interrogated by officials from the Attorney General's Office.

Other sources reported that there was a shoot-out with the kidnappers in El Rosedal neighborhood and that one of them was reportedly arrested. Isidoro Resa Valdes, director of the Federal District Judicial Police, telephoned Harp's residence at 1430 on 14 March. At that time, Harp's family denied Harp had been kidnapped, saying that he was in Acapulco. Harp, however, failed to attend the official unveiling of the Mexico Red Devils, a baseball team he had just purchased along with other stockholders of the Banamex Accival financial group.

Roberto Mansur, president of the Red Devils and one of Harp's partners, has commented on the kidnapping. Mansur said this incident has affected his partners and the Red Devils' owners so much that there will be changes in Mexican baseball's opening day ceremonies. We will have Mansur's statements later.

As of last night, the kidnappers had not contacted Harp's relatives or representatives of the Banamex Accival financial group. Officials from various agencies requested that information not be disseminated because Harp's safety is at stake.

Stock market analysts who were consulted said they believe that the drop in the Mexican Stock Exchange's price index on 14 March was strongly influenced by reports of Harp's kidnapping. A Banamex news release states that the kidnapping has not yet been confirmed. Meanwhile, the Mexican Stock Exchange suffered another sharp decline today. [passage omitted on stock market activity]

EZLN's Marcos Interviewed on Personal History

PA1603000494 Monterrey EL NORTE (Foreign Edition) in Spanish 11 Mar 94 pp 1A, 12A

[Report on interview with Subcommander Marcos of the Zapatist National Liberation Army (EZLN) by Juan Manuel Alvarado; "somewhere in the jungle of Chiapas"; date not given; first of two parts]

[Text] Still clutching his weapon, Subcommander Marcos put aside his cold expression, smiled through his ski mask, and led us into his community. He allowed us to see one of the huts where he lives, and he told us part of his life story, talking of his infancy, youth, and his adult life.

He became sullen when speaking of the love he left behind and when discussing his ideas on what this country could and should be. Subcommander Marcos did all of this in a hamlet where we could not return if we had to; we are still unsure how we got there or precisely where it is located.

This allowed us to get to know a pleasant subcommander and learn intimate details of his life. He told us part of his life story and showed us his customs; he recalled he had lived in Monterrey for a year while discussing with us the happy and the sad. He talked about his unknown identity, his "having no future," and, more than anything else, he showed a Marcos, who, as he says, "can die at any moment."

Our eagerness to talk with the subcommander did not diminish, and it was only surpassed by our curiosity and desire to know the real Marcos—the man who hides behind this nom de guerre.

With this in mind, we—reporters from EL NORTE and a photographer—went to this encounter, which was perhaps a frustrated encounter.

Outfitted with a rented jeep, a can of gasoline, blankets, and food, we departed for San Cristobal de las Casas en route to Ocosingo. From there we went to the hamlet of San Miguel, where we arrived at 0715 on Sunday, 6 March. A long line of journalists and reporters grabbed our attention and perhaps even dismayed us a bit. Eventually, patience gave way to impatience. Some

reporters gave up and left. Nevertheless, about 40 reporters remained behind, and we were among them.

At almost 1500, two Indians ran into the hamlet. They asked for the reporters from EL NORTE and REFORMA. Only we were included, and the others excluded. Not even the foreign reporters were taken into account, including those from THE NEW YORK TIMES, as well as those from the domestic press, as well as reporters from Spain, France, and Canada. Only reporters from EL NORTE and REFORMA would be taken to see Marcos.

The order was to wait until the rest of the reporters departed. We had to wait until 2230 on Sunday. There were two failed attempts to enter the jungle, but the third time was the charm.

When we first came upon him, he was outlined in a silhouette. We noticed the smoke of his pipe and his height, for he stood taller than the others who surrounded him. This was how we met Marcos: He emerged from darkness.

"Well, get ready. No questions right now, but if you would like, we can talk and wait for questions to come up... Come on then; I am going to take you," said the subcommander, who flirted with a female reporter from a magazine who had joined the group.

He proceeded in a red pickup truck, remaining in the constant guard of heavily armed soldiers. Three of them were women, while three others were men who carefully searched us and our jeep.

We advanced in almost complete darkness. The jeep bounced the entire way until we arrived at a small house. We were then asked to leave the vehicle, and from here we were led by a female soldier into a hut. The warning was clear: "Make no reference to the names of any hamlets or the amount of time it took you to travel here, and do not mention any specific markings along the way. If you want to take photographs of people, you must wait for them to cover their faces."

We slept there on Sunday. The following day, Monday, 7 March, we waited until 1500. At that time, the subcommander arrived with his guards. He had come to pick us up.

The man who startled the Mexican political system and surprised the world, decided right then to drive EL NORTE's jeep and asked one of the reporters and a photographer to ride in the truck. I was asked to accompany him. I now had a "chauffeur" and a revolutionary. He found it difficult to shift gears and accelerate the car in second gear and was very careful when he drove. Despite this, the vehicle got stuck, and we were only able to extricate it by pushing it out.

We had to go through three EZLN checkpoints, and at each one we were examined more carefully than the previous occasion. We were also warned about deactivated land mines along the side of the road. During the drive, the subcommander said something strange and out of place. He said: "I lived in Monterrey." Somewhat confused, I asked him very respectfully: Sir, did you really live in Monterrey? What part?

He grabbed his pipe filled with vanilla-smelling tobacco and answered over the jeep's noise: "Yes, I lived in Monterrey for almost a year. I lived near Felix U. Gomez. What I liked most about the place was the mountainous region. I worked in the outskirts of Monterrey, near Santa Catarina selling secondhand clothes. I was a secondhand clothes dealer. I only sold native clothes, nothing imported," he stipulated. "I also lived in the public washrooms of the Truckers Union located in Avenida Colon. Those were extremely filthy washrooms. I would also use the washrooms of the cinemas located in the same avenue. I was always around there."

He commented that the mountainous regions are quite special because over there they do not like charlatans. "I am going to give you a hint so that you can identify me. I played second string for the Rayados [not further specified]. I was what you could call a reserve player. I played right field. It was beautiful to fly in the outfield," he commented. "Beer is very popular there," he added, "from Monterrey I went to Veracruz where I sold fish."

He recalled that in Maderos Avenue, there was a restaurant that specialized in preparing goat meat with a very special flavor. He interrupts his comments to say that a Nuevo Mexico group had written him asking him to rescue that state. Later on, he commented about the traditions of the inhabitants and all the arrangements involved in getting married, like the gifts and the first time the couple meet on the wedding day.

He finally parks the jeep and tells us to get out. We walk for a short while until we reach the top of a hill where we enter a shack where there were several other EZLN members. We decided to rest, and the subcommander did likewise. A short time later, we began the interview with another reporter. Sitting in the hut surrounded by the other EZLN members, he commented that so far there had been no accord, negotiation, or agreement between the EZLN and Peace Commissioner Manuel Camacho Solis. The subcommander promised another interview later. He ate by himself and later departed but not before saying that he would return in the morning to take us to a party commemorating Women's Day.

On 8 Tuesday, he entered the hut very early in the morning amid the sounds of crickets and birds. We had beans, rice, and coffee for breakfast at 0700. There are no refreshments, television, or any other entertainment, only poverty.

Silvestre and Arturo, two Zapatists, broke the early morning stillness with two of their ballads: "I am an insurgent soldier, seeking a revolution I move along. And they all want to fight together as militia men... Without much to brag about, without any rest, they left their homes, they left their loved ones. I am an insurgent soldier, seeking a revolution I move along."

The subcommander returns at noon accompanied by several men and women, a part of the revolution that did not reached Chiapas. He drove our jeep again, and we reached a distant town after driving for a long time, while an airplane overflew the region. The sound of chickens, birds, and abundant vegetation gave way to three other EZLN checkpoints. We finally reached the town where arrangements for the party were still being made and the subcommander was responsible for bringing flowers.

He softened his stance and proceeded to tell about his entry into the Indian world and later the EZLN. "We arrived in the jungle in 1983, nearly 11 years ago. It was a very small group, only five."

The EZLN emerged with peasants tired of living like that. The original five arrived from the city, fed up with the legal forms of struggle, failure, and limitations, let alone the failure of the 1970's guerrillas. "This group set up camp in the jungle and started to adapt themselves to the environment to survive. Those were hardy days. It was necessary to extract food, dwellings, medicines, everything, from the jungle. There was no other way, and the villagers were not supporting us."

Seated on a school desk, he told about how they learned to survive first and then spread their ideas without religious interference.

His eyes are light and honey colored. His beard is gray and his dark brown straight hair shows out from under his ski mask. A tobacco smell surrounds him. He says: "The Indians had just had an experience with a group from the north, the northerners, I think they were called—popular politics, Maoist proletarian inclinations. They infiltrated the movement and tried to gain access to the communities' structures but were thrown out. They included Hugo Andres Araujo and Salinas' brother, Raul, but they were taken out also."

Marcos joked openly and appeared to be sincere during his interview with EL NORTE.

Lunchtime came, and we were served pork with rice and beans. The subcommander ate in his hut. We approached the hut and saw more than 50 heavily armed EZLN soldiers protecting the area. We were allowed to take pictures of Zapatists preparing food. In the background we saw Marcos' wooden hut, roofed with zinc and straw, with ventilation portholes and a guarded door. His bathroom has no massaging tub or any luxurious features. He only has a latrine and a water tank with a hose attached to pour water. Mud, smells, and barefoot children walking around make up this scene.

On the subcommander's invitation we went to a river to bathe. The cold water flowed slowly in the shadows. We dived into the stream, always guarded by a Zapatist. We returned and waited for the party, for which loudspeakers had been installed. A gas tank and a lamp were placed where the dance, to which all the people had been invited, would take place. Later, more than 150 armed Zapatists came down from the mountain led by the subcommander to start the celebration. In the background there were four unarmed women in civilian clothes but with their faces covered by shawls.

Capt. Benito announced the beginning of the cultural program, which featured songs, speeches, and military formations. The Zapatist anthem opened the celebration: "Zapatist fighters, the horizon is already in sight. The road will bring down those coming from behind. Let's march forward so we can win the fight because our homeland needs the efforts of the Zapatists. Men, women, and children, we will always make our effort with peasants, workers, and all the people. We must set the example and stick to our slogan. We will defend the homeland and die for freedom. Our history says that exploitation will come to an end. Our people will fight for freedom."

The party concluded with Subcommander Marco's departure in the darkness. He promised that he would be back on Wednesday 9 March for an exclusive interview with EL NORTE. He arrived after breakfast. He was reminded that, for the time being, we did not want to hear about the movement but about the man behind the ski mask and the lives of some Indians who had fought. "No, not that. I cannot say anything personal now. Maybe later. Let us start somewhere else," said the subcommander seated under the roof of a hut whose corners were guarded by three armed men and three armed women.

Second Part of Interview

PA1603025894

[Editorial Report] Monterrey EL NORTE (Foreign Edition) in Spanish on page 10A of its 12 March edition publishes a 1,000-word report on an interview with Subcommander Marcos of the Zapatist National Liberation Army (EZLN). The report, which is the second of two parts, is by Juan Manuel Alvarado who interviewed Marcos "somewhere in the jungle of Chiapas." The date of the interview is not given.

Alvarado describes Marcos as a "lively" individual who "suddenly becomes sullen and pensive when he recounts family members he has not seen for more than 10 years or when he predicts that his days are numbered." When recalling his early days in the jungle, Subcommander Marcos points out "he began to learn the dialect first, and later taught military courses, all of which helped him become a subcommander." At first, he used to write "about politics, as well as the domestic and international situations." He says: "Those were the times of the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front offensives," adding, "things in the USSR were starting to happen, discussions on the European Common Market had gotten under way, and I had the option to do just that—political analysis. Nevertheless, I was young and strong, and therefore I opted for something else. My comrades told me I should try the jungle, and so I did."

When asked about his youth, he says he had a "normal childhood." He describes his family as middle class, and he notes that he attended grammar school, high school, preparatory courses, and college, adding, "I did my graduate work in the jungle." Marcos is also quoted as saying, "Everything began with my parents," because from the time he was very young, "my parents always told us there were injustices in the world, and one could not just sit back and do nothing. Of course, they never took up arms. They were not religious people; they only did it out of love for humanity." Marcos adds, "My parents were aware of all the injustices, and they considered it their duty to instruct their children not to remain indifferent."

Subcommander Marcos says he went to "public schools and a university in one of the provinces," and that in addition to studying he enjoyed playing baseball, soccer, and basketball, "but most of all, I enjoyed reading." Alvarado points out that Marcos did not want to answer any questions about his personal life, and he would only say he left home as an adolescent and does not know if any of his brothers are alive.

Subcommander Marcos says: "Up until 1983, I did not participate in any movements, and that is why I tell photographers they are wasting their time by taking my picture. My photo is not in any file, not even in the Traffic Department's files, much less as a foreign agent. My ski mask does not hide a face with a past but, rather, a face without a future."

In concluding the interview, Subcommander Marcos says: "I was surprised when it was said we were awakening the people. The truth is that we wanted to awaken them, but we thought it was going to take much longer, and that other factors would influence this process. If we had foreseen how seriously our words would be taken by the people, we would have told them many more things we have not yet said, because we are just starting to feel our way."

Camacho Solis Outlines Political Position

PA1603035694 Mexico City LA JORNADA in Spanish 12 Mar 94 pp 1, 14

[Report by Victor Barillas and Oscar Camacho, including the "text" of a statement by Manuel Camacho Solis, commissioner for peace and reconciliation in Chiapas, on 11 March; place not given]

[Text] Yesterday, Manuel Camacho Solis defined himself as a "factor of reconciliation and stability and a useful element in the transition to democracy." In view of the "pressure" he is under to get him to exit the nation's political scene, the commissioner for peace and reconciliation in Chiapas warned he is not ready to let anyone infringe on his civil rights and that he "will not act in a hasty manner." He added: "I cannot, simply because of pressure, invalidate my political life and what I represent in politics."

In response to criticism leveled against the programs he headed as Mexico City mayor, Camacho said he is not going to allow himself to be turned into a force "that simply explains the flaws of others." He added that if there is no endorsement for amending the IFE [Federal Electoral Institute], Cofipe [Federal Code of Institutions and Electoral Procedures], and the agreements on peace, justice, and democracy, he will make the necessary political decision to help democracy advance and to foster the country's unity.

Speaking to some 300 reporters, Camacho outlined his political position in light of criticism leveled against the programs he implemented when he headed the Federal District Department [DDF], and he discussed the pressure exerted to get him to leave politics. He affirmed he will not submit to pressure nor will he act in a hasty manner. He stressed: "My duty is to contribute to unity and to participate in Mexico's democratic transition. Camacho Solis will be a factor of reconciliation and stability and a useful element in the transition to democracy."

Responding to criticism regarding his performance as mayor, Camacho Solis warned: "The future of the country will not be built by a single force. An alliance of national forces will be built to give the government the necessary foundations, and one must be up to the task demanded by the times ahead."

He then defended his former assistants at the DDF—some of whom served as assistants in the peace process—from "attacks" by some political columnists. "False information" has been leaked about these people, but those making these comments "are the ones who are connected to corruption and support it. I now hear that if Camacho makes a unfavorable decision, he will harm the interests of the PRI [Institutional Revolutionary Party], but these people do not realize that some of the programs he headed in the city continue to have the support of the majority of Mexico City's residents."

In this way he was responding to PRI presidential candidate Luis Donaldo Colosio's criticism of his "Does Not Circulate Today" program [a program to keep cars off the streets on certain days]. Camacho Solis added: "I do not accept the fact that some people want to turn me into a force that simply explains the flaws of others. Camacho has proven his loyalty to the president and has been efficient in carrying out the task entrusted to him."

Regarding the transition to democracy, he said there are two paths: "The path I consider most advisable would be the approval of the amendments to the IFE and Cofipe, which will enable us to stick to the agreements on peace, justice, and democracy signed by the parties and the presidential candidates. After I fulfill my mission in Chiapas, and if the conditions exist to allow me to contribute to guaranteeing the transition to democracy, I will support the transition and defend its results."

As for the other path, Comacho said: "If we fail to make advances in democracy, if instead of a peace agreement we have polarization, or if some want to infringe on my

political rights as a citizen after I fulfill my mission in Chiapas, I will make the necessary political decision to help Mexico advance in democracy and unity."

He noted: "There is nothing more important to me than maintaining and strengthening Mexico's unity—not unity for the sake of a mere conglomerate, but a unity that stems from feeling one's legitimate interests are assured and from opening the doors of institutions to the demands for justice of the Mexican society and people. In other words, we must create a nonexclusive unity—a unity that is founded on peace, justice, and democracy. This is my position, and this is where I will be."

In terms of the pressure to get him to leave politics, he said: "I am hearing now that Camacho can create problems, even though the work by this commissioner has always served and will continue to contribute to the country's economic, political, and financial stability. Some want to pressure me by fabricating administrative problems linked to those who are my assistants in Chiapas, when everyone knows the decisions at the highest levels of the Mexico City government were handled with honesty."

At this point, some reporters applauded his much-awaited statement. This was the first ovation. He said: "I do not accept the fact that some people want to turn me into a force that simply explains the flaws of others. Camacho has proven his loyalty to the president and has been efficient in carrying out the task entrusted to him."

He said: "Camacho will not present a problem for the other candidates who intend to carry out their duty to consolidate their political campaigns and demonstrate their effectiveness to the people. This opportunity has always been open."

Following is the full text of his statement:

"Today, I would like to comment on two issues. The first is related to a meeting I just had with the Coleto Civic Front. This is a very important issue for Chiapas. Later, I plan to refer to another unrelated issue.

Today I met with a delegation representing the Coleto Civic Front headed by Mr. Ricardo Diaz Martinez. The delegates stressed that the population of San Cristobal de las Casas favors peace and is working toward creating a favorable climate for negotiations. They are proud of the fact that San Cristobal de las Casas, their city, is hosting the peace talks. They have indicated their intention to be present as witnesses during the signing of any peace agreements that may be reached should the EZLN grass roots decide to accept any proposals.

With this symbolic act, reconciliation in San Cristobal de las Casas has already begun. During my next visit I will meet with the San Cristobal Civic Front in a friendship-and-reconciliation ceremony.

Now I am going to refer to the other issue—the issue of politics.

Ever since I was sent to Chiapas, I have done nothing but work for peace, often taking risks I had to take. I have spent the entire time honestly involved in this endeavor, and I have also taken advantage of all my experience with this single end in mind.

I will continue to do this until my mission is complete. It is because I concentrated on this goal and did not distract myself with other political issues that I have been able to show positive results to all those who trusted in my efforts, starting with the president of the republic.

Once again I would like to acknowledge the categorical support received from the Mexican Army in favor of a political solution.

Of course, to me it would have been preferable to continue moving forward with the Chiapas peace process before outlining my political position. Nevertheless, the circumstances and pressure involved are of such magnitude and force that, if I do not clarify my position now, I will end up damaging the search for peace in Chiapas, further complicating the process.

Currently, pressure is being exerted for this commissioner to withdraw from the country's political scene. I am hearing now that Camacho can create problems, even though the work by this commissioner has always served and will continue to contribute to the country's economic, political, and financial stability.

Some want to pressure me by fabricating administrative problems linked to those who are my assistants in Chiapas, when everyone knows the decisions at the highest levels of the Mexico City government were handled with honesty.

Those people leaking this type of false information are the ones who are connected to corruption and support it.

I now hear that if Camacho makes an unfavorable decision he will harm the interests of the PRI, but these people do not realize that some of the programs he headed in the city continue to have the support of the majority of Mexico City's residents.

No, I do not accept the fact that some people want to turn me into a force that simply explains the flaws of others. Camacho has proven his loyalty to the president and has been efficient in carrying out the task entrusted to him. I have made decisions in accordance with what is best for Mexico. Camacho will not present a problem for the other candidates who intend to carry out their duty to consolidate their political campaigns and demonstrate their effectiveness to the people. This opportunity has always been open. What I am not willing to do is to stop exercising my rights as a citizen. Mexico needs to bolster its opportunities, its road toward reconciliation, its democratic opening, its responses to the middle class, its resolve to be part of the new global economy, the vitality of its history, and its determination to open its door to justice.

I cannot, simply because of pressure, invalidate my political life and what I represent in politics. The future of the country will not be built by a single force. An alliance of national forces will be built to give the government the necessary foundations, and one must be up to the task demanded by the times ahead.

The best guarantee for economic and political stability today is the definite and orderly transit toward democracy. This should be done without violence and with guarantees for all—for the private sector, the workers, and for every political and civil organization without exception. A key guarantee of this entire process is to firmly uphold those agreements responsible for the country's macroeconomic balance and to ensure foreign investment confidence in the Mexican economy.

What Chiapas has proven is that if the forces of moderation, democracy, and peaceful change fail to strengthen themselves, the measures adopted by interest groups will make the task of government more difficult by creating deep divisions.

Let us see now, my friends. Let us now take a brief recess and exercise some reconciliation. I am about to reach the best part of all, but it would seem that I will have to leave without saying it.

As result of all I said before, ladies and gentlemen, I am not going to make decisions as a result of pressures, and I will not act in a hasty manner. My duty is to contribute to unity and to participate in Mexico's democratic transition. Camacho Solis will be a factor of reconciliation and stability and a useful element in the transition to democracy. Therefore, the question is this: What is the best way to do this effectively while remaining loyal to the nation?

The path I consider most advisable would be the approval of the amendments to the IFE and Cofipe, which will enable us to stick to the agreements on peace, justice, and democracy signed by the parties and the presidential candidates. After I fulfill my mission in Chiapas, and if the conditions exist to allow me to contribute to guaranteeing the transition to democracy, I will support the transition and defend its results.

Another possibility is this: If we fail to make advances in democracy, if instead of a peace agreement we have polarization, or if some want to infringe on my political rights as a citizen after I fulfill my mission in Chiapas, I will make the necessary political decision to help Mexico advance in democracy and unity.

There is nothing more important to me than maintaining and strengthening Mexico's unity—not unity for the sake of a mere conglomerate, but a unity that stems from feeling one's legitimate interests are assured and from opening the doors of institutions to the demands for justice of the Mexican society and people. In other words, we must create a nonexclusive unity—a unity that is founded on peace, justice, and democracy. This is my position, and this is where I will be.

Camacho will be a factor for reconciliation and stability and a useful instrument for democratic transition. Just as I have done since 10 January, at this moment I am wholly concentrating in the task of searching for peace in Chiapas.

Thank you very much, and thank you for being here."

Costa Rica

Figueres, Labor Minister-Designate Meet Union Heads

PA1603005294 San Jose Radio Reloj in Spanish 1730 GMT 15 Mar 94

[From the "Radio Reloj Newscast"]

[Excerpt] The CPT [Permanent Workers' Council] presented six points to President-elect Jose Figueres and Labor Minister-designate Farid Ayales. The national union leadership met with them for the first time in (Sitrosimec).

In an atmosphere of cordiality, open-mindedness, and defined visions looking at national interest issues, the CPT presented to President-elect Figueres six points that are very important to Costa Rican workers.

CPT Coordinator Gerardo Chavez said that among the key points the labor movement presented to Figueres are: a salary policy for the next four years, respect for the right to strike, approval of the unemployment [cesantia] law, and granting of labor rights to private sector workers. Chavez also urged them to honor the country's commitments with other governments.

The workers requested the establishment of specific guidelines on the free trade treaty [not further specified], state modernization, and how the social and economic life of Costa Ricans will change in the next four years.

President-elect Figueres said that the views of the labor sector will be taken into account. He added, however, that no decision will be made for the time being, because the new government will not be in office until 8 May.

Meanwhile, Labor Minister-designate Ayales said that these points deal with issues that are of interest to all Costa Ricans and added that they are willing to hold talks to settle specific problems that might come up in the future. [passage omitted]

Roundup of Costa Rican Economic Developments

PA1503135394

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on Costa Rican economic developments monitored through 15 March.

In the past months, the Treasury Ministry has maintained an aggressive policy in placing government bonds on the financial market. The debt financed by bonds in 1993 was 33 percent higher than in 1992. The high interest rates of the bonds have forced banks to pay higher rates, therefore loan costs also increase. This is bad for investment and production. (San Jose LA NACION in Spanish 28 Feb 94 p 39A)

According to the treasury minister, although the fiscal deficit reached 5 billion colones in January, at the end of the year, it should not be higher than 25 billion, which represents 2 percent of the GDP. The rise in the January deficit was because of reduced tax collection, increased salaries in the public sector, and $7 million paid toward the Paris Club debt. (San Jose LA REPUBLICA in Spanish 1 Mar 94 p 12)

El Salvador

Cristiani Rules Out Possibility of Technical Fraud

PA1503231894 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 12 Mar 94

[From the "Up to Date" newscast]

[Text] President Alfredo Cristiani today assured people that the charges made by opposition political parties regarding possible technical fraud during the 20 March elections only seek to mar the electoral process.

The ghost of possible fraud continues to hover in the atmosphere a few days before the elections take place. Nevertheless, this was ruled out today by President Cristiani who assured us there is no basis for fraud charges, rather these charges are generated by groups that foresee a negative result in the elections.

[Begin Cristiani recording] In my opinion, this is a totally wrong strategy that seeks to mar an electoral process that has been open and has complied with everything. With regard to the UN remarks, I believe these are simple excuses given what the results could be. [end recording]

As far as the problem reported by the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] on the transfer of voting places in several hamlets in the Chalatenango Department, President Cristiani said that the highest electoral institution was clear that this action is not intended to adversely harm or [word indistinct] any particular political party.

[Begin Cristiani recording] As has been explained, in four Chalatenango municipalities the population resides in the department's capital city—at the seat in Chalatenango. More people would have to travel if the voting takes place in the municipalities than would have to travel from the municipalities to Chalatenango given that the voting document indicates the voting place. [end recording]

Cristiani told the media that the people should feel assured because there will be 900 Onusal [UN Observers for El Salvador] observers and approximately 3,000 independent observers, who in his opinion will be the witnesses to the election's transparency.

UN Secretary General Seeks Extension of Onusal Mandate

PA1503220094 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 12 Mar 94

[From the "Up-to-Date Newscast"]

[Text] Venezuelan Enrique Ter Horst was confirmed today by the UN Security Council as the UN representative and chief of the UN Observers for El Salvador [Onusal] mission which will have to take charge of the pending matters following the elections. UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali said that it will be necessary to extend Onusal's mission after 31 May when its mandate concludes. This is before the inauguration of the government elected during the 20 March elections as there is no prospect that by that date the peace agreements will be met.

UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali made reference to the Salvadoran situation barely one week before the end of the electoral process indicating that although there have been some difficulties due to the delay in the delivery of voting documents in former conflict ridden areas, Onusal is negotiating with the authorities on the solution of this problem.

Justice Officials Accused of Playing Into U.S. Hands

PA1503193094 San Salvador Canal Doce Television in Spanish 0300 GMT 12 Mar 94

[From the "Up-to-Date Newscast"]

[Text] Supreme Court President Mauricio Gutierrez Castro today accused Justice Minister Rene Hernandez Valiente and Nelson Segovia, the director of Salvadoran Legal Studies, of playing into the hands of the U.S. Embassy, which, according to Gutierrez, seeks judicial reforms even though they violate the nation's sovereignty.

[Begin Gutierrez Castro] I will be very satisfied no matter who becomes president of the [Supreme] Court as long as that court president serves the country and not a foreign nation. [end recording]

According to the Supreme Court president, Hernandez Valiente and Nelson Segovia are at the service of the U.S. Government which seeks major reforms to the judicial system. Reforms, such as those to the penal codes, remarked Justice Gutierrez, have been criticized by nationals as the nation's autonomy is lost. This harms the nation, the justice noted.

[Begin Gutierrez Castro recording] Mr. Segovia makes up part of the group of attorneys linked none other than to the nation's financial sector; besides, he has extremely good relations with the U.S. Embassy in our country. Now as far as Mr. Rene Hernandez Valiente is concerned, there is nothing more to say. His work has been limited to implementing the laws paid for by the U.S. Government. [end recording]

Mr. Gutierrez Castro is currently seeking to be reelected as a Supreme Court magistrate. He noted that his candidacy is in response to attorneys' support, but most of all because [words indistinct] judicial system's independence could be lost.

[Begin Gutierrez Castro recording] I feel that the Judicial Branch's independence is in danger; this is why I am running. It is not simply to seek reelection. This could or could not happen. [end recording]

The Supreme Court president once again received demonstrations of support for his reelection by the BAR association in Ahuachapan Department. On 12 March, more than 2,000 attorneys will participate in elections to choose the 42 candidates for justices.

Guatemala

Belizean Troops Patrol Border, 'Harass' Residents

PA1603011294 Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE in Spanish 15 Mar 94 p 20

[Text] Melchor de Mencos, Peten—As Belizean Prime Minister Manuel Esquivel broadens his anti-Guatemala campaign, Army troops of that former colony are patrolling the border area and warning Peten families not to enter their territory.

More than 3,000 Belizean soldiers are maintaining permanent surveillance along the alleged [supuesta] borderline. In fact, they built a wide highway that allows them to move easily from Cayo San Ignacio to Corozal, which is near the area that borders Peten.

It was reported that soldiers from the former colony frequently enter Peten territory and that they even harass peasants who have lived and worked there for many years.

Prime Minister Manuel Esquivel has started an anti-Guatemalan campaign and ordered the expulsion of numerous families with years of residence in the territories under dispute although many of them already filed requests before the immigration authorities to reside legally in Belize.

In order to win support within the Belizean community, Esquivel maintains a hostile attitude toward Guatemalans and points out that there could be an invasion anytime.

In a recent meeting with Queen of England Elizabeth II, Esquivel advised the sovereign on the need to maintain English troops in the former colony, but his efforts were unsuccessful. The monarch, however, assured him that the British will use the Belizean jungle as a training ground for some soldiers.

Peten authorities in Melchor de Mencos said that Guatemala maintains minimal surveillance along the border and this could facilitate new incursions by Belizean soldiers. They added that more than 3,000 Guatemalans

have been expelled since Esquivel became Belizean president, although his grandparents hail from San Miguel, a town across from the Island of Flores. Esquivel also admitted that he has relatives residing in Santa Elena (a Peten community) but has never met them. The authorities noted that his hostile attitude toward Guatemalans is inexplicable.

URNG's Ilom Gives Insight Into Guerrilla War

PA1503150194 Guatemala City PRENSA LIBRE in Spanish 11 Mar 94 p 8

[Interview with Gaspar Ilom, leader of the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity, URNG, by Henry Hernandez Marroquin; place and date not given]

[Text] [Hernandez] Mr. Ilom, the guerrilla struggle began many years ago. Do the insurgents still think the same way?

[Ilom] I believe that first of all there was a fundamental decision. It was to struggle and dedicate oneself to the people's cause. As of that moment, it became an historic option and path, motivated by structural reasons in the country. It was not a romantic decision, but a very serious, profound, and delicate political decision. We had to respond to the situation that had existed in the country for many years when we took up weapons in 1962. The armed struggle is a last resort, not tactical or casual.

[Hernandez] Everything seems to indicate that there were options to solve problems, but perhaps you were closed to establishing an open dialogue?

[Ilom] No, history has demonstrated that political spaces have been totally restricted. Other times they have been formal, but we believe that real democracy still does not exist in Guatemala.

[Hernandez] Why didn't you negotiate from the beginning and not after 33 years of armed struggle?

[Ilom] One could say now that the conditions are right. Seeing what has occurred at the national and international level, we could say the time is right for negotiation.

[Hernandez] Could this represent a success or satisfaction?

[Ilom] Satisfactions are of a moral nature and the greatest is having contributed so that the people can organize, demonstrate, defend themselves, and struggle for their rights. I believe that is my greatest satisfaction, and also being able to participate in the people's armed struggle.

[Hernandez] How would you refer to the case of the millions killed?

[Ilom] War is always painful. One goes to war when there are supreme reasons that justify it or make it necessary. In Guatemala the social cost has been quite high, but the majority of those killed was a result of the manner and means used by the Army to repress and massacre entire populations.

[Hernandez] Did the guerrillas provoke that repression?

[Ilom] I believe that we seek only general objectives. In war there is a substantial difference. One is the military struggle on which we base ourselves. It could be described as a clean war with the painful loss of human lives.

Unconventional warfare is different because of the tactics involved. The Army, however, kidnaps, tortures, and kills, and that is repression. Sabotage becomes a military technique, recognized by any treatise writer (tratadista). We are involved in a unconventional war.

[Hernandez] There is talk of a war, in the field and politically. The military claim they won the first one and that the URNG [Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity] seeks to win the second one. How do you view this?

[Ilom] That is a very fanciful and absurd view. On the one hand, because it does not respond to reality, because the URNG has not been defeated, despite the fact that the Army has proclaimed itself the winner approximately 800 times in the past 10 years.

Another mistake is to say that there is a political and military war. For us it is an overall form of struggle. This enlightens us and preserves the armed movement. These are affirmations by recalcitrant sectors who do not want to seek a peaceful solution.

[Hernandez] Why do you maintain a contradictory position and conduct terrorist acts while engaging in a peace dialogue?

[Ilom] Let us make one thing clear. We conduct military activities, not terrorist activities. As long as a cease-fire is not agreed upon, the URNG actions will continue. It depends on the Army to make a counteroffensive, although it can be resolved through political negotiations. Then, it is wrong to say that while there is dialogue there will not be war. It does not represent a lack of will, however.

[Hernandez] Don't you think the people see this as an inconsistency?

[Ilom] No.

[Hernandez] Why?

[Ilom] For us it means remaining in the struggle. What has not been said is that there are sectors seeking to block the progress in the peace talks.

[Hernandez] What sectors?

[Ilom] Both the Army and private enterprise have come out in that direction.

[Hernandez] What makes you think they are the ones, and what objectives do they seek?

[Ilom] It is clear, because they are the minority privileged sectors that do not want transformations that are necessary for the country in every respect. They want to maintain society as they have for the past 30 years, to maintain a counterinsurgency situation that has led the majority of the people to poverty. This is always done at the cost of the people, who must endure subhuman conditions.

[Hernandez] By blowing up bridges and electricity towers, are you directly struggling against those sectors?

[Ilom] Of course. We have conducted military sabotage of bridges and some electricity towers that specifically affect the large producers of the country who do not want the people to organize and claim their rights. In the same way, last August we began to charge the war tax on farms, in view of the intransigence of sectors that do not want the negotiations.

The checkpoints and highway holdups are not our actions. They are carried out by the military, with the aim of discrediting us. I would also like to explain that the latest incidents, such as the demolition of the San Juan River bridge on the way to the Atlantic was not the work of the URNG.

[Hernandez] Don't you stop to think that the people are the ones who suffer from the demolition of bridges and the lack of electricity?

[Ilom] It only causes them inconveniences. Of course, we would not like it to happen, but reports exaggerate how people are affected. They are inconvenienced by having to transfer from one vehicle to another and having to wait for electricity repairs to be made to restore service.

[Hernandez] Have you ever considered other methods that do not affect the population?

[Ilom] Yes, we have other alternatives such as the practice of the war tax. This has been selective and carried out at very specific political moments.

[Hernandez] When you speak of the war tax, how many victims have had to yield to your demands?

[Ilom] Look, I can't say how many, because many of them have paid their tax and they could have been affected. It is an important activity and we have made some tax extensions for humanitarian and labor reasons.

[Hernandez] How successful have you been?

[Ilom] We have been successful economically.

[Hernandez] Is part of the success you speak of the kidnapping of Franterno Vila Giron?

[Ilom] No, that was not done by the URNG. It is quite different to collect taxes from a farm than to kidnap persons. In this case the Army must be investigated.

[Hernandez] Yet the guerrillas are accused of having links to the FMLN [Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front] to conduct kidnappings.

[Ilom] That was a baseless charge aimed at affecting the FMLN and the URNG. We have clearly said so.

[Hernandez] Are you going to continue with the war tax?

[Ilom] Until the process of negotiation concludes. We are only beginning and that activity has been reported at the international level.

[Hernandez] In other words, the URNG does not have economic resources?

[Ilom] Economic resources are always insufficient, but the URNG has been struggling for 12 [number as published] years and can continue to do so with or without money. It is not an economic problem, but rather a political one.

[Hernandez] There are guerrilla forces that are out of control. Is this so, and could it be described as a disintegration?

[Ilom] There is no force out of control in the URNG. It involves bandits or special Army groups who conduct counterinsurgency activities.

[Hernandez] It was reported in Europe that Commander Ilom is tired of the struggle and is searching for new objectives. Is this true?

[Ilom] You can say you have seen Gaspar Ilom and that he has the same revolutionary enthusiasm he had on the first day, only with 30 more years of experience. I am not tired. On the contrary, each day I am ready to struggle for my people in whatever form is necessary.

[Hernandez] When the URNG becomes a political party, what will your wishes and role be, and who among the commanders could be a presidential candidate?

[Ilom] That is not a function of the URNG. We have not strived for leadership, much less for any candidacy. We have a project that will permit the country to progress and to resolve an armed conflict. Then the bases can be established to resolve the economic, social, and political crisis.

[Hernandez] But for such a project, one needs to be in the presidency.

[Ilom] We are a developing political force and a real alternative for uniting efforts and seeking consensus.

OAS Commission Requests Withdrawal From CPR Areas

PA1503151194 Guatemala City SIGLO VEINTIUNO in Spanish 11 Mar 94 p 2

[Article by Alberto Ramirez Espada]

[Text] The OAS International Human Rights Commission described to President Ramiro de Leon Carpio during a meeting held last night at the presidential palace the need for the withdrawal of all military detachments located in areas where the Communities of Resistant People (CPR) have settled. The meeting was held following the conclusion of an OAS visit that lasted several days to the areas in conflict.

Leo Valle Lanza, president of the international commission, indicated they had received reports from the CPR settlers on harassment by Army soldiers, mined camps, and restrictions placed on their movements. "It is obvious that as a result of the proximity of the combat areas, there could be guerrilla movements, but this does not necessarily imply the CPR are cooperating with the subversives," Valle Lanza added.

"The only thing they want is to be recognized as a civilian population and for their most basic rights to be respected," noted the international official who also indicated President de Leon Carpio had confirmed his intentions to respect those rights. This is why the OAS delegates consider the demobilization of the military detachments near the CPR a top priority. Nevertheless, they received Defense Minister Mario Rene Enriquez' assurance that no military operation are being carried out in those areas.

The international commission was made up of Valle Lanza, David Padilla, Elizabeth Houppert, and Osvaldo N. Kreiner. The commission was accompanied by Fernando Alvarez Guadamuz who indicated they had visited Xalbal, Cantabal, Cuarto Pueblo, San Francisco Los Angeles, San Luis, and La Esperanza; they also spoke to the soldiers of the nearby detachments.

Government Not Planning Offensive Against CPR

PA1503182294 Guatemala City SIGLO VEINTIUNO in Spanish 12 Mar 94 p 5

[Text] Yesterday, Vice President Arturo Herbruger Asturias denied any possibility that the government and the Army are planning an offensive against residents of the Communities of Resistant People (CPR). "The Defense Ministry has already denied such accusations. It clearly stated that there will not be unreasonable actions against them or that there will be any persecution," he added.

In paid advertisements, CPR members claim that since 10 February, there have been "large military mobilizations" apparently aimed at subjecting them to military control, preventing them from rebuilding the Ixcan Grande Cooperative, and stopping more refugees from returning.

Herbruger noted that far from organizing acts to intimidate or affect these people, the government is involved in efforts to protect them.

Deputy Foreign Minister Bernardo Arevalo also said the members of the OAS Inter-American Human Rights Commission (CIDH), who recently visited these communities, did not tell the Foreign Ministry about similar complaints. Arevalo said that in the letter requesting permission to visit the CPR's, the CIDH did not mention this as a motive and only limited itself to saying that it wanted to observe the reintegration of refugees into the communities process.

Honduras

Economy Minister Signs GATT Membership Protocol

PA1503190494 Tegucigalpa LA TRIBUNA in Spanish 11 Mar 94 p 12

[Text] Honduras yesterday officially signed in Geneva, Switzerland, the GATT membership protocol to become a contracting party after two years of difficult negotiations.

From Geneva, Economy and Commerce Minister Dalmer Urbizo Panting, after signing the GATT protocol, reported the ceremony was held in the presence of 26 GATT contracting countries. "For Honduras, the signing of this protocol represents a historical event of great importance, which concludes a long, intense, and sustained campaign to transform and strengthen the economy's external sector," Panting noted.

With the signing of the membership memorandum, it is now up to Congress to ratify Honduras' GATT membership. On 11 April, at the latest, the country will become a contracting party.

Additionally, Panting reported that he met with representatives of the Intellectual Property Office in Geneva, where techniques were established to create a similar office in Honduras. He added that the way in which this organization will cooperate with our country in different areas was analyzed in order to establish an adequate framework for international investments.

Panama

Candidate Carles Explains Government Plan

PA1503143894

[Editorial Report] Panama City Telemetro Television Network in Spanish at 0200 GMT on 10 March, in its 30-minute "Challenge '94" program, broadcasts a live or recorded interview with presidential candidate Professor Ruben Dario Carles, first vice presidential candidate Guillermo Quijano, and second vice presidential candidate Dr. Tomas Herrera of Change '94, which comprises the Nationalist Liberal Republican Movement (Molirena), the Civic Renewal Party, and the National Renewal Movement (Morena). The interview is conducted by Dorita de Reyna at the Telemetro Television studios in Panama City; the date is not given.

Reyna begins by asking Carles what changes are endorsed by Change '94. In turn, Carles asks Quijano to answer, and Quijano replies: "Change '94 is a presidential ticket of men who are capable, dynamic, honest, and who have decided to give all of their administrative ability to creating employment and eradicating administrative corruption in Panama. This is what Change '94 stands for."

Reyna then asks Carles why, if he was indeed a man of influence in President Guillermo Endara's administration, he failed to do more over the past four years to help achieve these goals. Carles replies that he was merely the comptroller general and, as such, he could only give his opinion, because he had no true decisionmaking power. He says: "I was only the comptroller. I was not a minister or a president. But now, when you make me president, then I can be held accountable."

Reyna then asks Carles how he would rule without a majority in the Legislative Assembly. Carles replies: "The draft bills we intend to present will be so necessary and desirable that they will be approved, and my administration will be so exemplary that it will enjoy the cooperation of all legislators, because everyone will feel compelled to participate in such a good administration."

When Reyna notes that Carles is known for his unyielding positions and poor negotiating ability, Quijano intercedes and says he believes the new administration will create an atmosphere of teamwork, adding that the vice presidents will play an important role on the team.

Reyna asks Herrera what tasks appeal to him considering that vice presidents do not have specific roles. Herrera replies: "Allow me to say that the vice presidents will assist the president," adding that the vice presidents "will do whatever the president entrusts us to do."

Reyna asks Herrera how poverty can be reduced in a country where 50 percent of the population is considered poor and which still has an enormous foreign debt. Herrera replies: "For the time being I am not concerned... [pauses] It is not that the foreign debt does not concern me. It is true that this problem will affect several generations. The foreign debt cannot be repaid during one government term; this would be impossible. I must say that to resolve the unemployment problem we need to protect current job sources, both in the city and in the countryside, mainly to avoid a migration from the countryside into the cities."

Reyna asks about the ticket's plans to create jobs, to which Quijano replies that there are several programs and not enough time in the program to explain them. Nevertheless, he says one of the programs involves housing, adding that this program includes plans for the construction of 115,000 homes—homes he dubs "housing solutions"—which will in turn create 25,000 new jobs over a five-year period.

Quijano is interrupted by Reyna after he starts to explain plans for a reforestation program. Reyna asks whether the housing to be constructed by Change '94 will be for the poor, and Quijano replies: "The housing will be only and exclusively for the general population," and he adds that even the unemployed can participate through the "New Life" program, which makes "every family member jointly responsible for the debt." He adds: "Even people who have no regular income can either receive a home improvement loan or a small house to start a new life with hope and optimism for the future. This is our philosophical concept."

Herrera adds: "Of course, there are other programs, such as incentives for private investment programs. Jobs can only be created through private investment incentives."

Reyna then broaches the problem of law and order, and she asks how Panama can be attractive to investors if the country has so many security problems. Herrera replies: "You are referring to a public service issue. Let me tell you that all public services have to be improved. If public services do not work—and this includes electricity, water, security, transportation, streets, and so on—the country cannot be attractive to investors. The idea is to make public administration efficient, and when we speak of making it efficient, we are also speaking of efficient public services that will enable businesses to rest assured that they will have dependable and inexpensive public services. All of this is part of an environment that attracts private entrepreneurs. In addition, we will have an honest government, and there will be complete honesty in administering public funds. Those investors who come to the country to invest will know that no one will demand a bribe or a hidden commission, because there is a presidential commitment to avoid such things."

Reyna quizzes Carles on alleged cases of looking the other way when other people in the government have not been entirely honest. Carles says that in all cases that come to his attention, the people involved were dismissed and that many of these cases are still pending in the Attorney General's Office.

Reyna then switches to the topic of U.S. bases and asks Carles about his public stand on the appropriateness of renegotiating the status of U.S. bases in Panama and whether it would not be more profitable for Panama to properly use these reverted areas. Carles replies: "Well, this is a matter of priorities. We have already had a great number of properties returned and to the present we have not used them. In a few years, we will be receiving a great deal more. We cannot receive them all, simultaneously, without using them. We need to establish with some sort of priority what areas we should dedicate to certain uses and what areas we can allow to continue to be used as they are being used now while we have other options. It is a question of prioritizing time."

Reyna then asks Quijano to explain how their government plan deals with this question. Quijano replies: "Our priority is jobs. Right now, we cannot let 14,000 or 15,000 families lose their jobs with the closure of U.S.

bases in Panama. We have enough reverted areas to start modernizing the economy through a maritime center in these reverted areas. The question of modifying the U.S. bases lease can then be dealt with slowly but surely by future administrations. Right now, however, we need to protect the thousands of Panamanians who today earn their living honestly in the bases in Panama."

Reyna switches the subject to privatization. She asks Carles if privatization is part of the Change '94 plans and he replies that not everything should be privatized. When she asks what should, Carles replied: "We must privatize the railroad, and I will tell you something else. Panama still does not have cellular telephones. This is something that needs to be privatized." Reyna interjects and asks whether this means privatizing INTEL, National Institute of Telecommunications, or the cellular telephone service. Carles replies: "The cellular telephone service." Reyna reminds Carles that all along he has favored privatizing INTEL. Carles replies: "There are other INTEL services that could be privatized. We should not be afraid to privatize; we must look for good areas that can be privatized. Before I forget, I want to quickly tell you about the debt. As Comptroller General, I never had anything to do with the handling of the public debt. This was the responsibility of others. Regarding the commercial bank debt, I have never favored the Panamanian Government hastily beginning negotiations with commercial banks. I have always said it. It is very clear in the minutes I took, where I say that we need to negotiate the best option among the various alternatives that do not interfere with the work of the state and do not affect public services, especially those of a social nature. We must grow first and pay the debt after. Let it be very clear, there are others who are in a hurry to pay the debt. I have said this must go to the end of the line."

Herrera stresses the need to remember who created the debt in the first place and proceeds to quote figures of what it was in 1968, when the military coup took place, and of the situation on 20 December 1989, the date of the invasion and end of the dictatorship.

Quijano stresses Molirena's support for Carles and denies a suggestive question by Reyna that a certain amount of coercion was needed before Molirena agreed to support Carles instead of Guillermo Ford.

Reyna asks Carles whether he would be willing to govern by consensus, including parties that may have opposed him. Carles replies: "I have not made any pacts with anyone and I have not assigned political opportunities to anyone. I am going to choose the people who can best serve the country."

Poll Shows Perez Balladares Favored

PA1503222194 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 15 Mar 94 p 1A

[Report by Juan Pritsiolas]

[Text] Some 45 percent of Panamanians believe that [Democratic Revolutionary Party, PRD, presidential candidate] Ernesto Perez Balladares would favor creating a new military force, but also believe him to be the most reliable presidential candidate. These results were obtained in a nationwide poll conducted by the CID/GALLUP firm for EL PANAMA AMERICA during the week of 26 February-3 March.

Some 23 percent of 1,218 citizens polled did not answer the question on the creation of a military force. Some 19 percent of those polled said none of the seven candidates intend to create a military force. For 6 percent of those polled, Ruben Dario Carles intends to create a military force; while Mireya Moscoso de Gruber and Ruben Blades got 3 percent. The other presidential candidates registered 1 percent.

Regarding the most preferred candidate, three out of every 10 Panamanians said they prefer Perez Balladares. Carles obtained 22 percent, Mireya Moscoso 11 percent, Blades 10 percent, while Eduardo Vallarino, Samuel Lewis Galindo, and Jose Salvador Munoz garnered 4 percent each.

Perez Balladares Charges Campaign Waged Against PRD

PA1503210594 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 15 Mar 94 p 1a

[Article by Vilma E. Figueroa B.]

[Text] Ernesto Perez Balladares, PRD [Democratic Revolutionary Party] presidential candidate, yesterday charged that a campaign is being waged by official parties to link his political group to acts of violence. In addition, Perez Balladares denied at a news conference that Argelis Chavez—accused by Arnulfists of aggression—is a PRD member.

The Arnulfist Party [PA] National Directorate reiterated that its presidential candidate, Mireya Moscoso de Gruber, was attacked in Puerto Armuelles on Saturday by a woman who had a PRD flag in her hands. The PA warned it will not remain passive in light of the mounting violence aimed at it.

During the PRD news conference Perez Balladares presented Chavez indicating she did not belong to his party, rather, she was registered as a member of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC), from which she had recently resigned. The presidential candidate also said that Chavez currently works with Ricardo Perez Colman, a PDC legislator, who confirmed her resignation.

During the news conference, Argelis Chavez acknowledged she had a stick in her hand but it was not to attack the PA candidate, rather it was to "whack her little brother" who had strayed off.

Perez Balladares charged there are political parties, which he did not identify, that are paying some individuals to carry PRD signs and to provoke incorrect actions to make the party appear violent. "We have had to carry the blame for violent actions that brought mourning to the nation; this still bothers us. Nevertheless, we have made an effort because we know that the country deserves better proposals," he underlined.

Meanwhile, Fernando Arias, from the PA, said they have been the victims of the attacks and that the Puerto Armuelles case has been confirmed by at least six persons.

Poll: 69 Percent Want U.S. Bases To Remain

PA1503170294 Panama City EL PANAMA AMERICA in Spanish 12 Mar 94 p 1A

[Report by Juan Pritsiolas]

[Text] The latest CID/GALLUP poll reveals that seven out of 10 Panamanian citizens believe that the United States must maintain its bases in Panama. Additionally, six out of 10 Panamanians think that the cost of living has increased the last four months. The survey conducted exclusively for EL PANAMA AMERICA details that 69 percent of 1,218 people polled hope that the U.S. Southern Command remains in Panama after the year 2000, and 23 percent reject the U.S. presence.

Regarding the cost of living increase, it is mostly felt by 40-year-old women and those with a high school education. Despite the cost of living increase experienced by Panamanians, the poll showed that 62 percent believe the country's situation will improve in the next two years.

Regarding the creation of jobs, nearly half of those interviewed said the government is responsible for hiring more people in government positions, but four out of 10 Panamanians think the private sector must increase its efforts to create new jobs.

The view of those polled contrasts with the objectives of government and international organizations economists, who think the state must reduce its payroll, which employs 140,000 officials earning monthly wages totalling 69 million balboas.

The CID/GALLUP poll also revealed 55 percent of those polled prefer to work in the private sector and only 27 percent favor a job in the public sector.

Roundup of Electoral Developments

PA1503164194

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on developments related to the Panamanian elections scheduled for 8 May 1994.

Today, Ruben Blades, Papa Egoro Movement (MPE) presidential candidate, visited the neighborhoods of El Chorrillo, San Felipe, and Santa Ana. He was accompanied by supporters and MPE candidates for other elective posts. Commenting on recent acts of violence, he pledged his party will never incite violence. (Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 9 Mar 94)

Today, candidates to different elective posts signed the Electoral and Ethics Pact at the Santa Maria La Antigua University, whereby they pledged to conduct their political campaigns without violence. Attending the ceremony were top leaders of the different political parties and legislator, representative, and mayor candidates in the Panama Province. (Panama City Circuito RPC Television in Spanish 2300 GMT 9 Mar 94)

Travelers Must Declare Cash, Liquid Assets

PA1503174394 Panama City LA PRENSA in Spanish 11 Mar 94

[Article by Ibeth Vega G.]

[Text] President Guillermo Endara's government has approved, through an Executive decree, the obligation of every person who enters the country to declare under oath how much cash or liquid assets they are bringing with them. According to the decree, the measure will control the entrance of fiduciary money, "since right now, a great many people enter the nation with large amounts of cash and other assets and no one knows their origin or destination."

Several weeks ago, DEA agents in the United States said Panama cooperated more in the fight against drug trafficking during Manuel Antonio Noriega's military dictatorship than the current democratic government.

According to a Presidency press bulletin, the government order seeks to safeguard the principles ruling the International Financial Center operating in Panama and to prevent the fraudulent entrance of ill gotten cash and other valuables. In this regard, the document indicates that "although our legislation does not prohibit the entrance and exit of cash and other liquid assets, it is advisable to safeguard the Panamanian banking center's principles. This assures that passengers entering the nation with cash and other assets, that the cash and assets have legal origins and are not the product of illegal drug trafficking."

The government said the Customs Directorate will be responsible for enforcing the decree as well as punishing the violators. Forms, therefore will be drawn up to read: "Traveler's Sworn Statement," in which the person, national or foreigner, will declare his assets.

Yesterday, members of the National Banking Association pointed out that the initiative can be healthy, but only as a precautionary measure as it is very difficult to prevent money laundering. Meanwhile, others said the measures could cause the number of attacks on tourists to increase as the amount of cash being brought in will be known.

Argentina

Gore's Planned Talks on Drug Laws Reported

PY1603001194 Buenos Aires CLARIN in Spanish 15 Mar 94 p 6

[Text] U.S. Ambassador James Cheek on 14 March said that on 21 March U.S. Vice President Al Gore will propose to President Carlos Menem the need for Congress to pass a law creating the status of repentant within a group of new legal weapons against drug trafficking. Cheek thus confirmed what was reported by CLARIN on 14 March.

In order that Gore's proposal not sound like diplomatic pressure, Secretary for the Prevention of Drug Abuse Alberto Lestelle said "it is very probable" that Gore and President Menem will discuss this sensitive subject. "There is absolute coordination between Argentina and the United States on this subject," Lestelle pointed out.

During a news conference on 14 March to report on Gore's agenda here, Cheek said the "United States has been suggesting and endorsing the laws approved by Congress that, I understand, are supported by the Argentine Government and the majority of Congress."

In order to clarify any doubt, the U.S. ambassador added: "We have stressed the need for the approval of these laws in order to give the Argentine Government the necessary cooperation." In this manner, Cheek referred to the draft bills that create the status of repentant, informer, undercover agent, and controlled delivery of drug shipments, which the powerful DEA (Drug Enforcement Agency) demands to make the struggle against drug trafficking in our country "more efficient." DEA experts believe that with these new laws drug traffickers can be fought "more efficiently."

Besides asking to approve these laws, Washington also wants the military to give their logistical support to the security forces in this struggle, although it understands that "for the time being" it is not necessary. U.S. Antinarcotics Under Secretary Robert Gelbard [title as published] last week gave signals about these two subjects to officials from the Argentine Foreign and Interior Ministries and the Secretariat for the Prevention of Drug Abuse.

Following a ceremony in the Communications Secretariat headed by Oscar Gonzalez, Ambassador Cheek referred to the U.S. interest in the approval of a law including, among other subjects, the status of repentant.

The U.S. concern over these laws began to be expressed mainly after the Mar del Plata Penal Court for Economic Crimes released Colombian John Arroyave Arias, who was involved in the Shrimp Operation.

After learning about Cheek's statements, Lestelle said he believes the draft bill he sent to Congress 20 days ago "will be approved before the end of the year, if the congressmen decide so."

Lestelle added: "We rejected a draft bill approved by the lower house because it lacks the status of repentant."

Radical Civic Union [UCR] congressmen nonetheless unleashed a storm. UCR Deputy Gaston Ortiz Maldonado, vice president of the Chamber of Deputies Drug Addiction Committee, labeled Lestelle's decision to send a new draft bill to Congress as "untimely" given that the lower house already had approved a bill he himself drafted.

Secretary Against Using Military in Antinarcotics

PY1503174194 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 2041 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 14 Mar (NA)—Secretary for the Prevention of Drug Abuse Alberto Lestelle today said that the Armed Forces "should not interfere" in the antinarcotics effort in Argentina, because "the security organizations are effectively conducting this struggle."

Lestelle emphasized his viewpoint by comparing Argentina to Colombia, Bolivia, Peru, and the United States. He said Argentina "does not have problems as serious as theirs to justify the Armed Forces' participation in this struggle."

He also said that the Argentine Government has "fully" agreed with the United States on the need "to update Argentine laws, which are the legal basis for this difficult struggle."

Lestelle admitted, however, having received a specific request from Robert Gelbard, the number two man in the Drug Enforcement Agency [as received] in this regard, as was stated in an article published today in the Buenos Aires press. He explained that this issue has already been discussed at the Inter-American Commission for Drug Abuse Prevention.

Lestelle also asserted that there is a bill modifying the law that penalizes drug trafficking. He explained that "the only pending aspect of the problem is that related to informers."

He pointed out: "We have met with some congressmen to make sure that the figure of the informer is included in the law, thus ensuring that it includes the four elements—the informer, the repentant drug trafficker, the undercover agent, and the court-monitored drug delivery—and thus help justice to function better."

Lestelle favors inclusion of the "repentant drug trafficker" in the current laws, "as long as it has legal bases."

He emphasized: "With legal protection enabling the person to appear before the courts and report on whatever is required, people will act responsibly, will not flee the country, and will logically not be saying just any nonsense."

Lestelle said this was not the case of the well-known "repentant drug trafficker" Andy Cruz Iglesias, who told the Spanish judges about Argentine connections with an

international dollar laundering gang, which was the source of the so-called "Yomagate" case in Argentina.

"The judge deemed Andy Iglesias' remarks valid, but reality showed that the data reported by Iglesias were not that correct," Lestelle said.

Referring to the repercussions in Argentina of Iglesias' testimony, Lestelle said: "It is not necessary to tell the truth for a scandal to arise." He added: "The required legal action was adopted, and the appropriate people contacted."

In conclusion, Lestelle rejected demonstrations in favor of the legalization of drug use, and warned that "the economic excuses used in this regard have no foundation, because to legalize the drug it would be necessary to produce the drug in the country. To do this we would have to build drug processing laboratories, and these would have to be controlled by the central government, as occurs in the case of laboratories that produce medicine."

Defense Minister Camilion Interviewed

PY1503211494 Buenos Aires LA PRENSA in Spanish 12 Mar 94 p 4

["Exclusive" interview with Defense Minister Oscar Camilion by Fernando Nole—place and date not given]

[Text] [Nole] Minister, there were rumors this week that the deal with Lockheed to refurbish the Skyhawk aircraft was almost closed. Has the agreement been signed yet?

[Camilion] This agreement is almost closed. We believe all negotiations will be finalized in late April. The agreement includes the refurbishment of 36A 4M Skyhawk aircraft: 18 will be done in the United States and the rest in Argentina, in the Cordoba Materiel Area [AMC].

[Nole] Can you tell us about this dual program negotiation, because there are many versions.

[Camilion] A Defense Ministry and Air Force delegation held talks with the Westinghouse company—which will provide the celebrated radar installations—with Pratt & Whitney—which will supply the avionics—and with Lockheed. Talks were also held with the U.S. Navy to renegotiate letters of intent originally agreed on over the refurbishing of a significant number of aircraft. Third, Lockheed has begun talks with the U.S. Smith Industries because we want that company to participate in this program. And, last, talks were held by the Defense Ministry with the Vought company to coordinate the Pampa 2000 aircraft project.

[Nole] Who will run the former aircraft factory?

[Camilion] The AMC property will not be transferred to anybody. It will be run by a group of companies that will be headed by Lockheed with the Air Forces' participation.

[Nole] There were rumors that the purchase of these aircraft caused concern in Chile.

[Camilion] I do not think the Chileans have anything to worry about. We discussed this subject at length with the former Chilean defense minister (Patricio Rojas). When he visited Argentina, he clearly said that Chile is not worried about Argentina buying Skyhawks and disclosed that Chile was buying Mirage interceptors.

[Nole] Over the past few days there have been rumors about an aborted sale of cannons to Liberia whose final destination was, in truth, Croatia. Did this triangular weapons deal exist?

[Camilion] No. The deal was exclusively with Liberia and was vetoed right from the beginning. We cannot sell anything to Croatia. There was a proposal to sell Pucara aircraft to Croatia, but it was turned down due to the international weapons embargo on the region. We were not aware of an embargo on Liberia, but the Foreign Ministry found the operation was not feasible because there was also a weapons embargo on that country. But let me make it clear that this sale was for Liberia and not for Croatia.

[Nole] Where did the rumor on the interest in sending weapons to the former Yugoslavia come from?

[Camilion] Those were mere speculations, although I must admit that I am personally interested in investigating their origin.

[Nole] What sort of investigations has your ministry started regarding the participation of military men with guerrilla elements that held up an armored vehicle on the [Buenos Aires] beltway.

[Camilion] We have obviously started an investigation and have been in contact with the SIDE [Army Intelligence Service]. This problem has worried us, we are investigating it, and what worries us most is a possible link between members of the Armed Forces with some intelligence service or criminal group. Our investigations are to determine if there are other connections. We cannot conduct more exhaustive investigations because the Defense Ministry cannot engage in domestic intelligence activities. That must be handled by the Interior Ministry and the Federal Police.

[Nole] Naturally, but it is very worrisome that members of the Army and of the security forces act in an organized manner with criminal groups.

[Camilion] Undoubtedly, although we believe the beltway case is an isolated case. We must be on the lookout to see if there are other connections, but we believe this was an isolated case and do not attribute to it—despite the ideological mixture of the group—any political implications. This is, essentially, a common case of delinquency.

[Nole] Does the fact that many servicemen work for private security enterprises to obtain extra money have any effect on the three branches of the Armed Forces?

[Camilion] This problem is worrying because the need for another job somewhat affects the Armed Forces' professional conduct. However, it is currently unavoidable due to the low salaries officers on duty earn and, consequently, this ministry and the Armed Forces have accept that this situation will remain a military reality for some time, that is, the need for the officers to have other jobs.

[Nole] Armed Forces salaries have always been a polemic and much discussed subject between the Defense and Economy Ministries.

[Camilion] This year's budget is considered reasonable, which does not mean the Armed Forces's salaries are satisfactory. We are not being subjected to any pressure or negotiations for salary increases for the civilian and military sectors. The 1994 budget remains unchanged.

[Nole] How is your relationship with [Economy Minister Domingo] Cavallo?

[Camilion] We have always rationally explained the Defense Ministry's needs to the economy minister and have always received rational answers. First, we have systematically organized Defense Ministry expenditures and so far have always had a positive response. There is no disagreement with the Economy Ministry.

[Nole] Regarding drug trafficking, the United States seems to want to form a multinational force to fight this problem. Are you working on this?

[Camilion] Argentina has two forces to fight trafficking; the Border Police and the Naval Coast Guard. This is why the Armed Forces have no reason or intention of participating in the struggle against trafficking as happens in other countries. Naturally, if circumstances justify it, we may cooperate by granting logistic support, but we do not want the Armed Forces involved in the struggle against trafficking, because the three branches do not want this.

[Nole] Was there unrest within the Armed Forces over the arrival in Argentina of Italian prosecutors to investigate the disappearance of Italian citizens in our country?

[Camilion] Yes, there was a lot of unrest. The Armed Forces were deeply concerned because they believed—rightly so in my opinion—that this could mean reopening a chapter which Argentina considers closed. It was considered that these investigations would reopen cases that have already been closed and would mean interfering with the three branches, with the legislative branch over the laws it dictates, with the federal chamber over the rulings it hands down; and the executive branch over the amnesty that it ordered. This chapter is regarded as closed and nobody wants it reopened through indirect channels.

[Nole] My last question. Within the Armed Forces, are there any groups that favor a coup?

[Camilion] None at all. The Armed Forces institutionalization process in Argentina is comprehensive. There is no chance of a military coup taking place in Argentina.

Foreign, Defense Ministers on Troops to Bosnia

PY1503213694 Buenos Aires NOTICIAS ARGENTINAS in Spanish 1537 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] Buenos Aires, 15 Mar (NA)—Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella today confirmed the dispatch of Argentine troops to the Bosnia-Herzegovina region. He pointed out, however, that it still must be determined if the troops will travel from Buenos Aires or if some of the troops serving in Croatia will be transferred.

Therefore, Di Tella confirmed that Argentina will provide military cooperation in the Bosnia-Herzegovina region, accepting a petition made by UN Secretary General Butrus-Butrus Ghali, who also asked for a special $10 million financial contribution for the peace operation there.

Before opening an OAS-sponsored seminar on the security issue at the Alvear Hotel in this capital, the foreign minister admitted today: "We are studying if the troops deployed in Croatia will be transferred, new troops will travel, or a mixed contingent, involving these two alternatives, will be deployed."

For his part, Defense Minister Oscar Camilion said Argentina "will not be squandering money" by dispatching a 150-man contingent to the Bosnia region. He said: "It is a reasonable contribution to the peace of a country whose fate has caught the world's attention."

Thus, Camilion challenged the criticism leveled by some political leaders over Foreign Minister Guido Di Tella's compromise with UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali. These political leaders understand that there are other priority issues.

In this regard, Camilion admitted that "there are other pressing needs," but championed the governmental decision to dispatch troops to Europe's most conflictive region because "it represents a medium-term interest in the existence of a global situation of good relations."

The defense minister summarized: "Argentina will play a small role in this peace process, because there will be thousands of troops there and Argentina will merely contribute 150 soldiers."

The Argentine compromise was established on 14 March after a meeting between Argentine President Carlos Menem and the UN secretary general, who also asked for a special financial contribution for the funds allocated to the peacekeeping operations.

Argentina has more than 800 troops deployed in Croatia, a region in the former Yugoslavia where there are virtually no more armed clashes. Therefore, Butrus-Ghali sought to guarantee Argentina's presence in

Bosnia, where the United Nations plans to deploy between 10,000 and 15,000 Blue Helmets.

Bolivia

Garcia Meza's Revelations May Involve Many

PY1603024394 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1743 GMT 13 Mar 94

[Text] La Paz, 13 Dec (EFE)—Various politicians said today that former Bolivian President Luis Garcia Meza, who was detained in Brazil, could involve many of the active members of Bolivian politics in the actions of his de facto government (1980-1981) for which he was sentenced to 30 years in prison.

Deputy Benjamin Miguel of the Christian Democratic Party (PDC) said today that Garcia Meza is quite "smart to do that ... to try to stain with his accusations many people who now appear to be democrats and respectful of the Constitution but who encouraged the military dictatorships."

Garcia Meza, who was detained on 11 March by Brazilian police in Sao Paulo, said: "I am paying for the things others did and I will prove it."

Deputy Miguel, who lived in exile during the Garcia Meza government, said, "the former dictator has nothing to lose" and he will try to get the greatest political advantage from his declarations before and after he is extradited to Bolivia.

The La Paz morning daily HOY says in an editorial on 12 March that there is "fear of Garcia Meza," and that "this time the people are not the ones who are afraid of this character, but his old allies and Bolivian politicians who are about to get another bucket of water" from the former dictator.

Juan del Granado, a lawyer in the civic lawsuit of the so-called "Trial of the Century" against Garcia Meza that lasted seven years, labeled the former dictator a "liar and forgetful." He said, however, that whatever Garcia Meza says will serve to open the case again against new people who were involved in the criminals acts committed by the former general.

Miguel Urioste, leader of the Free Bolivia Movement (MBL) that is in the government coalition, said that "the two previous governments protected the former dictator" in reference to former President Victor Paz Estenssoro (1985-1989) and Jaime Paz Zamora (1989-1993). The first because it let him go and the second because it did not want to arrest him.

Urioste added: "I hope Garcia Meza is man enough to accuse his accomplices, accessories, and protectors, and that the heads that must roll begin to roll."

The MBL announced that it will propose in the next few days that the Constitution, Justice, and Judicial Police Committee of the Chamber of Deputies investigate the protection given to Garcia Meza by people linked to current Bolivian politics and diplomacy.

Deputy Eduardo Paz of the opposition Conscience of the Fatherland (Condepa) said that all those who cooperated with the Garcia Meza government should be "unmasked." He supports any initiative to identify the former dictator's accessories during the five years he remained a fugitive from justice.

According to a "confidential" report released by the local FIDES news agency, more than 100 people have covered up for Garcia Meza in Bolivia including soldiers, congressmen, close friends, relatives, and people who benefited in administrative and political positions during the de facto government from July 1980 to August 1981.

The Bolivian Supreme Court sentenced Garcia Meza on 21 April 1993 to the stiffest sentence, 30 years in jail, for nine crimes of sedition, murder, malfeasance, and stealing government property.

Brazil

Expectations Over Gore Visit Outlined

PY1503195394 Sao Paulo GAZETA MERCANTIL in Portuguese 12 Mar 94 p 9

[By Maria Helena Tachinardi]

[Text] Acting Foreign Minister Roberto Abdenur has told this newspaper that the Brazilian Government hopes to be able to announce "a formula for bolstering scientific and technological cooperation between the two countries," before U.S. Vice President Al Gore's visit to Brazil on 21 March. "It is a major signal from the United States," he added, without giving further details.

Itamaraty and the Science and Technology Ministry are working together on the issue. Science and Technology Minister Israel Vargas told this newspaper: "We may be able to reactivate the scientific and technological cooperation agreement between Brazil and the United States." The two countries signed a document for an extension of the agreement about three years ago; they could not agree to sign a new agreement because the United States imposed a clause that, at that time, could not be accepted. The clause dealt with the need to preserve intellectual property rights. The two countries are now having problems in that area.

Al Gore will disembark in Brasilia at around 1830 [2130 GMT] on 21 March. He will be coming from Buenos Aires, where he will open a conference on telecommunications sponsored by a United Nations specialized agency, the International Telecommunication Union. He will stay in Brasilia only until midnight on Monday, after fulfilling of a six-hour agenda. He is scheduled to meet with President Itamar Franco upon his arrival. The agenda includes issues like the hemispheric summit meeting, which is scheduled for the end of the month in

Washington, an initiative that the Brazilian Government considers "a catalyzer of the new phase in the relations between the United States and Latin America," according to Abdenur.

At the U.S. Embassy, Al Gore will meet with the Brazilian community ("town meeting") [preceding two words in English] to address several matters. The idea is that Gore should meet with local leaders from various sectors. He will then meet with Foreign Minister Celso Amorim, who will host a dinner in Gore's honor. The formal conditions of the dinner have yet to be established.

Abdenur believes Brazil-U.S. relations "are marked by an unprecedented level of convergence, which does not mean there will not be divergencies in some areas." Abdenur added that the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), among the United States, Mexico and Canada, reflects an "improvement in the value of Latin America in the eyes of the United States," because it opens the possibility for the future expansion of the commercial agreement.

The same day Al Gore is in Brasilia, Itamaraty will welcome the foreign ministers of 12 Rio Group countries and Portuguese President Mario Soares.

Embraer Sells 2 EMB-145 Jets to Australia

PY1503213494 Sao Paulo O ESTADO DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 12 Mar 94 p B10

[Text] Sao Jose dos Campos—The Brazilian Aeronautics Company (Embraer) has sold the first two units of the 50-seat regional transport EMB-145, which is based on the [EMB-120] Brasilia plane. The Australian airline company Flight West, which intended to purchase four planes, now has decided to purchase two planes and place two firm options to purchase two more planes. The contract's cost has been estimated at $60 million. The contract was signed by Flight West Chairman Dennis Buchanan. Flight West has been operating both [EMB-110] Bandeirante and Brasilia planes for many years.

The EMB-145 is Embraer's most daring project and is still in its development stage. The EMB-145's initial flight has been scheduled for April 1995. Budgeted at $300 million, this project has a potential $1 billion market in the next 15 years. Each plane is sold for $13 million. Fourteen customers from eight countries have confirmed 136 purchase orders.

Judge Recants Charges of Foreign Aid to Parties

PY1503221294 Sao Paulo FOLHA DE SAO PAULO in Portuguese 11 Mar 94 Section 1 p 9

[Report by "special correspondent" Humberto Saccomandi in Rome]

[Excerpt] Antonio Carlos Amorim, the Rio de Janeiro Court of Justice president, on 10 March recanted the charges he had made previously on illegal foreign financing for a Brazilian political party. He emphasized that he does not have any evidence but only a report from a "respectable" person.

Nevertheless, Amorim believes there actually exists money illegally entering Brazil to finance politicians. Reportedly, the financing mainly comes from Italy, but also from France, Germany, and even Poland. He noted that he is not aware of the party that reportedly benefited from this financing. If I were aware, Amorim said, "I would not have to ask the Italian courts for help." On 8 March, Amorim hinted he actually was aware of the party involved. He said: "It is a party that might gain power in October."

The judge denied that he had stressed that the money came from Mafia criminal activities or from drug trafficking activities. In remarks to Brazilian journalists at the Vitorio Mele attorney general's hall in Rome, Amorim on 10 March said: "I never said that." [passage omitted]

Chile

President Frei Holds News Conference

PY1503225094 Santiago Television Nacional de Chile Imagen Internacional in Spanish 1600 GMT 13 Mar 94

[News conference granted by President Eduardo Frei Tagle to local and foreign journalists at La Moneda Palace on 13 March, moderated by unidentified government official—live]

[Excerpts] [Moderator] Manuel Maria Mesiger, of Madrid EFE.

[Mesiger] Mr. President, among the pending issues inherited from the previous government are human rights, political reform, and border conflict. Which do you regard as the most difficult and which will you tackle first?

[Frei] Are you referring in general or to problems with a specific country?

[Mesiger] In general.

[Frei] Well, in general, I believe that all of the issues you have mentioned are important. Human rights, border conflicts, well, I do not think any has precedence over the others. The subjects are quite varied because with border conflicts, for example, we have made various degrees of progress with bordering countries. We have made considerable progress during the past years and will continue to do so. As for human rights, one of the key and priority issues—and the handling of this subject was one of the achievements of President Aylwin's government—as our government program states and according to our moral beliefs, is that it is an unavoidable subject in a democracy like ours. The human rights issue will be contemplated in all our government actions—that is, in the amending or improvement of our laws—as will field of

education and respect for all international treaties on the issue. I believe I already said this is my speech last night, but Chile has a tradition in the human rights field that we will consolidate and strengthen.

[Moderator] Pilar Rodriguez, Megavision.

[Rodriguez] Mr. President. One criticism of the previous administration was that it was not firm enough against cases of corruption. You, however, said yesterday you would be very firm in this regard. I would like to know if your firmness will prevail over the political cost it may represent for the political parties that support you.

[Frei] First, corruption in the public administration is a problem that currently plagues any modern society. We know of several governments that have been ousted due to corruption in the political system. Chile is not immune to these dangers. We are not an island in the world. We have clearly stated that Chile has never been plagued by generalized corruption, there have been some irregular actions, but I absolutely agree with the measures taken by President Aylwin's government on the subject, such as the case of Codelco [Copper Corporation] right from the start. We want to reassert the necessary firmness with which a government must act in this regard. It is not just a question of making amendments or the use of legal tools, it is a subject we can discuss with the opposition because it is a national issue. As I stated last night, it is a matter of attitude of the government servants. I want to establish a line to be followed, as I stated last night, and I will follow it right from the beginning and will demand that it be followed by all my aides, be they mayors, governors, heads of services, or representatives of public enterprises, etc. The entire state apparatus. We will act firmly because we are aware that when corruption sets in it is very difficult to eradicate. We will act with firmness, no matter the political cost it may represent.

[Rodriguez] Even if this means dismissing servants guilty of corruption.

[Frei] Definitely. I will not hesitate. We must act... [pauses]... I think I have already proven this in some cases before assuming the presidency. [passage omitted]

[Moderator] Carlos Briones, Deutsche Welle.

[Briones] Mr. President. Not long ago in Valdivia, two outstanding Latin American geopolitical experts—General (Augustin Toro Davila), Chilean, and General (Edgardo Mercado Jarin)—pointed out the need for regional integration. The fact that two geopolitical experts made such a remark took people by surprise. I would like to now what line your government will follow, especially regarding what has been called the mega-project?

[Frei] Are we referring to Latin American regional integration?

[Briones] Yes.

[Frei] The Chilean economy is currently open to the world. Our priorities lie in the rest of the world. During the past few years, practically one third of Chilean exports went to Pacific Asia, one third to the American continent, and the other third to the European Union. This has gradually changed during the past years and now practically one fourth of our relations are with Latin America. Therefore, without forgetting the Chilean presence in the markets, this is reflected by our participation in APEC [Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation]—within a few days, next week to be precise, the finance minister will attend an APEC meeting. This will be the first time our finance minister has officially attended an APEC finance ministers meeting. By the end of the year, in Indonesia, we hope to fully participate in this organization. At the same time we are also present in the U.S. market. Everyone is aware of our viewpoint regarding free trade agreements and NAFTA. We are also continuing to strengthen our relationship with Europe, the European Union, that has been a traditional Chilean friend in all fields—and from where our cultural roots and civilization come.

Without neglecting all I have just mentioned, we want to place special emphasis on Latin American integration. I said this in my speech yesterday, we also discussed the subject during the luncheon on 11 March with the visiting presidents. Chile has cooperation agreements with practically every Latin American country, with the sole exception of three countries with which we are working on the issue. We do not only want to work on the economic, commercial, and political aspects of the integration of our nations, we also want to work on the educational aspect. I have already informed the visiting presidents that there is a UNESCO program, sponsored by the UN Development Program, to begin deep-rooted changes in the education, culture, learning, and teaching program for our people. We want to carry out this program in the next few years with other Latin American countries. This is our neighborhood, our environment, where we share similar culture, a language, and I think there is still a lot to be done in this field. This development will allow us to compete in the great world groups and to improve the living standards of our people. In Chile's case, this significant increase in our commercial relations with Latin American countries mostly involves manufactured goods, not just raw materials as in the case of our relations with the great powers. Therefore, we are going to place special emphasis in this field. We are also talking about what has been called open regionalism, which does not seek agreements that will close Latin American doors to the rest of the world, but rather opens them to the world community.

[Moderator] Maria Jose Errazuriz, EL MERCURIO.

[Errazuriz] Mr. President, when you were choosing the members of you cabinet, the Socialist Party complained about a lack of communication with you and later talked about the need to establish the new role for the member parties of the Coalition of Parties for Democracy [CPPD] under your government. What role will you give

the CPPD member parties during your administration and do you think this is the end of coalition as Senator Adolfo Zaldivar stated?

[Frei] I am just starting my presidential term. During the campaign and these past few days I have without doubt maintained an incredibly fluid relationship with the CPPD member parties. We are working with them, we have exchanged views, we have a government program, we must continue working united and this is what we are going to do. The situation of each party is, obviously, different from what it was in 1989. The parties are now more consolidated and organized. Together with the ministers of the political sector we have established a strategy and modus operandi to work with the parties throughout my administration.

As for the coalition, as I stated last night, I believe the president's authority plays an important role. All member parties fully respect presidential decisions. Obviously, when you have to elect 300, 400, 500, 600 government servants there will always be someone not satisfied with the appointment. I feel that my appointments have taken into account the political balance and also respected excellence and the presence of the various Chilean personalities. We will continue to work on this with the political parties.

[Moderator] Luis Alvarez, REUTERS.

[Alvarez] Mr. President, I want to ask a question that may sound rather repetitive. General [Augusto] Pinochet continues to be controversial abroad and each time you were asked about him, in your capacity as candidate and president-elect, you said you would state your position regarding his presence as Army commander after assuming the presidency. Although principles are involved, I would like to know whether you, as President Aylwin did at the beginning of his mandate, will ask Pinochet to step down as Army commander because there is no reason for him to continue in that post.

[Frei] The situation is quite clear. The commanders of the Armed Forces, who assumed their posts shortly before President Aylwin assumed the presidency—according to the law and the Constitution—have the right to remain in their posts until 1997. I will respect the Constitution and the laws and, as we have always stated, work to reach a consensus so that future Chilean presidents will recover their authority to appoint the Armed Forces commanders. This is the case in every world democracy and this is a principle we will always uphold. As I said last night, relationships in a state situation must be impersonal. This is not a matter of personal choice, it is a matter of impersonal relations within a state and we will work on this guideline with the Armed Forces. Since I assumed this position, our relationship has been incredibly fluid and we will discuss the great subjects and the role the Armed Forces must play in Chile after the year 2000.

[Moderator] Pablo Honorado, Channel 13 Television.

[Honorado] Mr. President, just before ending his mandate, Former President Aylwin pardoned some individuals sentenced to life for the attack on General Pinochet's motorcade during which five of his bodyguards died. Yesterday Pinochet said he was upset by the decision but that he respected it because it was the president's prerogative. Right now there are some 70 prisoners charged with terrorist attacks. You have the prerogative to pardon them. Will you do so if they request it?

[Frei] There is no policy established for pardoning prisoners. I respect, have respected, and will continue to respect and support all of President Aylwin's decisions. It is a prerogative granted to the president by the Constitution and the law and, in this specific case, it was a prerogative granted him by Congress through an initiative of the opposition. I reiterate, there is no policy on the subject. It is a case by case decision. Each case must be assessed and exhaustively studied separately. This is the way I will handle the subject.

[Moderator] Veronica Munoz, Radio Nacional.

[Munoz] President Frei, police actions—in practice not in theory—during arrests, hold ups, and demonstrations throughout Aylwin's administration were strongly criticized. What does your government intend to do to avoid abuses that, unavoidably, represent violations of human rights?

[Frei] As I stated at the beginning, our government will always respect human rights, but we are also going to clearly respect the authority, laws, as well as the police institutions. Anarchy begins when there is no authority and, therefore, you can only follow one single guideline in this regard. It is up to the court to pass judgment on cases of violations of human rights or abuse. We will clearly respect human rights, the Constitution, the law, the legal procedures established by the various institutions to safeguard public order and, thus, avoid any sign of violence or terrorism in our society.

[Moderator] Ted Cordoba, Bolivian daily ULTIMA HORA.

[Cordoba] Regarding your interest in trade with neighboring countries and regional integration, there are currently two great projects: One is already underway between Bolivia and Peru in the port of Ilo, and the other is a project you have in mind to establish a development center in Arica. My first question is, if the three countries regard these as competitive projects, could they not establish a great port between Ilo and Arica that will benefit the entire Latin American continent, including Brazil, on the Pacific? My second question is: Please expand your comment that following the visit to Chile of Ximena Sanchez de Lozada [the Bolivian president's wife] there will be talks on Bolivia's landlocked situation.

[Frei] Thank you for your question because, first, I want to thank the Bolivian president for his gesture of asking

his wife to attend the presidential inauguration ceremony as an expression of friendship—not just with me but with the entire Chilean people. We will continue to work on this subject, we will enhance the significant progress we have already made. Last October, during the meeting of the Rio Group, I had a long chat with Bolivian President [Gonzalo] Sanchez de Lozada. We discussed how to progress in every field of common interest. There are many cooperation and infrastructure projects. With determination and courage we will progress in these fields. I want to paraphrase what President Sanchez de Lozada said when he visited Chile: We will help Bolivia join the world. All the projects you have mentioned fit in here. We have infrastructure projects underway, we are building highways, we must improve our railway services, and we must continue to progress in the bioceanic integration route. In Northern Chile we have two or three alternatives, we have others in Central Chile, and during our chats over these past days with the visiting presidents, especially with the Uruguayan president, we discussed the possibility of establishing bioceanic routes, a tunnel, etc. We have a great number of alternatives to improve physical investments that will contribute to the integration of our countries. We can make a lot of progress and we have the commitment and approval of our governments and people to do so.

[Moderator] Jose Miguel Alfaro. Television Nacional de Chile.

[Alfaro] Mr. President, you said yesterday that Chile is a reconciled country. Yet there are numerous cases of violation of human rights during the military regime that remain unclarified and unjudged. What do you propose so that those Chileans who still pine for their loved ones who were lost under the military regime may, some day, with their mind in peace shake hands, and look the military men—who still do not admit their crimes—in the eye.

[Frei] One of the great achievements and successes of President Aylwin's government has been to progress in national reconciliation. This was his priority task, as he mentioned in this first speech at the National Stadium when he assumed the presidency. This has been reflected in many initiatives—starting with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and followed by a series of legal initiatives regarding reparation for the victims—about which we are all aware. Truth and justice must never be yield in this regard. It is an unwavering path. We can now say we know the truth but we can also say that there are still cases for which justice has not been implemented. My government will support and cooperate, with all our effort and dedication, to enable the courts to conclude outstanding cases, establish the truth, and implement justice. This is necessary to complete Chile's reconciliation process. I would like to quote from [Santiago Bishop] Msgr. Oviedo's sermon yesterday, which was greatly commentated and applauded by all Chilean sectors. He said, quote, without an inner decision to reach reconciliation, no political or administrative power can make it happen. Moreover, without efficient courts that recognizes each and everyone's dignity, this inner decision will falter and die. We must continue to tread on the chosen path without risking all we have achieved so far, unquote. I feel this phrase reflects the current feeling.

[Alfaro] Does your government have a concrete initiative, a specific gesture, for concluding pending cases?

[Frei] Well, once we settle in, the new justice minister will contact the Supreme Court to cooperate and seek all mechanisms to speed up these cases. [passage omitted]

[Moderator] Orlando Milessi, ANSA.

[Milessi] Mr. President, one of the concrete objectives of your program is to fight extreme poverty. It has been said that about 1 million Chileans will have been pulled out extreme poverty by the end of your government. You said yesterday it was time to end the rhetoric regarding poverty, about which so much has been said. How do you propose to fight extreme poverty? Where will you obtain the funds for this? Why was nothing said about the crusade against poverty?

[Frei] Well, as you know one of the priorities of our government is to fight poverty. We believe it was a priority of the Aylwin government, and that great progress was made in this field. In early 1990 an agreement on tax reform was reached which provided additional income to fight poverty. This tax reform was renewed last year thus allowing us to fight poverty without causing a fiscal deficit, inflation, or upset the macroeconomic balance. Regarding specific actions, first I will preside over the social intraministry committee to fight poverty. I will personally preside over this committee. I have been working on this project with the ministers of the area to come up with concrete proposal. We believe this subject is of national importance and, therefore, are will invite private sector organizations, like the Hogar de Cristo and similar organizations that are in permanent contact with the poorest sectors. We will invite all nongovernment organizations, the commercial and production sectors, etc., and all Chilean sectors because we believe this is a priority national issue. We will permanently emphasize this subject and I believe that—more than just talking—we need to know what to do, how to do what is necessary, how to make the state apparatus more efficient, how to control expenditures and investments in the poor sectors and ensure they reach the people. Many times the money gets never reaches its final destination due to the excessive red tape, etc. We will work on this right from the beginning with decisions and efforts of the entire state apparatus. [passage omitted]

[Moderator] Persio Dalvel, Concepcion daily EL SUR.

[Dalvel] Mr. President. You have expressed the need to give preferential treatment to the poverty problem. How do you ratify that priority with the recent purchase of

weapons for the Army and the belief that the Armed Forces must be constantly modernized?

[Frei] I firmly believe that there is no arms race nor that the Chilean Armed Forces are purchasing new equipment. They are merely replacing very ancient equipment. For example, the Chilean Air Force wants to replace its Hawker Hunter planes that are 25-30 years old and are no longer operational. We want our Armed Forces to safeguard the country's integrity. Chile does not have a bellicose attitude. We uphold peace and the purchases Chile makes fall within that context: To protect our territorial integrity and sovereignty. We will continue to work in this direction. I do not see our struggle against poverty as incompatible with an Armed Forces capable of responding to this criteria which, as I have already said, is not bellicose but rather for peace. [passage omitted]

[Moderator] Daniel Mazzone, EL OBSERVADOR ECONOMICO, of Uruguay.

[Mazzone] Mr. President, you have just spoken of your meetings with presidents of other countries, and you mentioned Uruguayan President Luis Alberto Lacalle. He has said the agenda included a highway that will cross Brazil down to Colonia [Uruguay] and across the Colonia-Buenos Aires bridge. President Lacalle proposes that the highway reaches Chile, thus giving Chilean products access to the Atlantic. I would like to know Chilean expectations in this regard, and if there are any chances for the project.

[Frei] The bioceanic highway is a high priority in various Chilean regions. During my campaign I was involved in several conversations, even major meetings, that addressed this subject in northern Chile last year.

Our country extends more than 4,000 km. In each region I was asked for connection with Argentina, Bolivia, and other neighboring countries.

These countries have their priorities about the routes to be chosen. I attended a meeting in Iquique, for example, with delegations of governors and mayors of southern Peru, Bolivia, northern Argentina, Brazil, and even Uruguay, during which the priorities on this subject were discussed.

Consequently, we cannot meet all of the demands and implement all of the initiatives. We have priorities and we will analyze them from the viewpoint of Chile, to see how private investment can participate in those projects, because they are large projects. Chile has a law permitting concessions and the participation of the private sector in the construction of infrastructure.

President Lacalle and I talked about this bioceanic highway, which in the case of Chile would require not only a study but construction of a bridge that could operate all year round, according to our current flow of passenger and cargo. This deeply interests us and will receive careful consideration. [passage omitted]

[Moderator] Ana Maria Ojeda, daily LA NACION.

[Ojeda] Mr. President, when you disclosed the members of your cabinet, you named former Senator Mario Papi as coordinator between the Legislative and Executive Branches. I would like to known what specific functions do you have in mind for him?

[Frei] The functions for former Senator Papi are not functions for former Senator Papi. The debate has become personalized. I am not seeking a post for former Senator Papi, nor am I seeking a post for social democrats. I am creating a post I deem necessary. Why? Because I was a member of Congress and know what Congress is all about. I believe a fluid relationship between the president of the Republic and the legislators is very necessary. During the past few days I met with practically all legislators and explained to them why I created this post. We will establish the legal status of this post, but he will work with me. He is working to establish a fluid an permanent relationship between the president of the Republic and more than 167 legislators. I want legislators to be in permanent contact with the president, I want to maintain a fluid relationship with them. I have experienced Congress and believe this function is very important. Everyone agrees and in the next few days we will establish the legal status for this post. As of tomorrow Mario Papi will be doing this job which I regard as essential. [passage omitted]

[Moderator] Guillermo Espinoza, Chilean daily EL SIGLO.

[Espinoza] Mr. President, I would like to know if your role as commander of the Armed Forces, and the Armed Forces role as guarantors of institutional order—as stated in the Constitution—are compatible. If not, what can be done to solve this problem?

[Frei] In my speech last night, I clearly stated I will be president of all Chileans and the head of the Armed Forces as a symbol of national unity. Article No. 32 of the Constitution, Clauses 18 to 22 or 17 to 20 I think, list the duties and powers of the president of the Republic. They are also mentioned in other parts of the Constitution. I will follow these guidelines. There are some legal and constitutional amendments that I consider necessary so that these articles may be fully implemented. For example, in the case of the appointment of the commanders in chief, one article establishes that the president is empowered to remove the commanders in chief and also has a say in the promotion and retirement of Armed Forces members. There are, however, other articles complementing this specific article which prevent the president from exercising that power. As I have stated before, we will continue to work on this because we believe it is part of the effort to fully implement democracy and what is the case in Chile today: to have the president of the Republic fully respected, to have the Armed Forces subordinated to the political power that has been democratically elected by the people, and to

have the government respect the professional and nondeliberative role of the Armed Forces. Our relations are, and will be, based on this. [passage omitted]

Colombia

Traffickers Said To Discuss Peace Pact

94WD0249Z Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 19 Feb 94 p 14A

[Article by staff reporter Pilar Barrera: "Summit and Peace Pact Among the Mafia"]

[Text] On Friday, 11 February, traffickers and spokesmen from the most powerful Mafia in Antioquia, Valle, and the Coast held a summit meeting to sign the document for the new peace among the Mafia.

After seven years of a bloody war, with hundreds of dynamite attacks on Down With Drugs headquarters, selective massacres, and the creation of Persecuted by Pablo Escobar (Pepes), the traffickers leading the Mafia vendettas decided to sit down at the same table.

In Valle, protected by clandestinity, those claiming to be authorized spokesmen for the most powerful organizations in the country gathered for the first time.

In other words, they were representatives claiming to be acting directly on behalf of the brothers Gilberto and Miguel Rodriguez Orejuela, Jose Santacruz Londono, William Ortiz ("Miky"), and Salomon Camacho, for the Valle traffickers; Carlos Castano, brother of Fidel ("Rambo"), for a branch of the Medellin Cartel; and two lawyers and a pregnant woman, on behalf of the Escobars and Escobar's ex-terrorist chiefs confined in prison.

The terms of the agreement include several concrete, compulsory demands upon the Medellin Cartel strongholds.

Initially, Pablo Escobar's survivors must retract the accusations linking Fidel and Carlos Castano with the brutal attack on the Avianca airplane that occurred during December 1989, with a toll of 111 fatalities.

At the same time, Carlos Mario Alzate Urquijo ("Arete") and other Escobar ex-terrorist chiefs now in prison must secure Julio Mamey's appearance before the Prosecutor General's Office.

According to the statements made at the summit, Mamey fled to North America after the attack of 28 July 1989 that ended the life of Antioquia's governor, Antonio Roldan Betancur.

The Castanos and the top-ranking Valle traffickers believe Mamey to be the only one who could reveal to the Prosecutor General's Office the way in which the murder was planned, and the steps taken, at Pablo Escobar's order, to make the car bomb explosion that took Roldan's life appear as a murder committed by Jose Santacruz Londono.

"Arete" and other convicted members of the Medellin Cartel must require the liaisons who are at large to appear before the Prosecutor General's Office, to confess all their crimes, and to submit to the prison sentences imposed on them.

In particular, the Valle traffickers believe that their former archenemies must surrender Juan Rios, an Escobar ringleader known by the nickname "La Chepa [The Hump]."

The Cali traffickers accuse "La Chepa" of being the contriver of the principal massacres in Valle. They include, among others, the one that occurred on 25 September 1990 on a farm in the municipality of Candelaria (Valle), in which 27 persons were killed and several of the Cali Cartel's "capi di capi [top bosses]" escaped fortuitously.

Other Demands

The police have indications that Elmer Herrera ("Pacho Herrera") himself escaped from the gory incident by hiding in an official car.

Finally, the Valle "narcos" and their Antioquian allies from the Castanos' sector demand that Pablo Escobar's former aides revise the charges that they have made against them in the investigations being conducted by the Prosecutor General's Office.

Among other claims, the Medellin traffickers would have to retract the names that they have given to the Prosecutor General's Office of presumed members of the "Pepes," beginning with Castano.

A source explained to EL TIEMPO: "The fact is that whoever wins will impose the conditions."

An additional point is that the Escobar family, or those left with his fortune, must make reparation for the harm inflicted on the victims of the Mafia war.

An authorized source explained to EL TIEMPO: "These points are recorded in a document, initially signed by the participants in the Cali summit, that is circulating in the Itagui, La Picota, and La Modelo jails."

According to the same source, "Arete," Jhon Jairo Velasquez Vasquez, ("Popeye"), and Carlos Aguilar Gallego ("El Mugre") have already signed the document.

The negotiation process among the cartels began brewing two months ago, just 15 days after the Search Bloc located and confronted Pablo Escobar at a residence located west of Medellin, on 2 December.

As EL TIEMPO published in its 6 February edition, at Itagui, La Modelo, and La Picota there was a preliminary agreement among the Medellin Cartel convicts to start the search for a peace alliance with their Valle enemies and with the one said to be the head of "Persecuted by Pablo Escobar," Fidel Castano.

An incognito ex-prosecutor, Enrique Mancera, the attorney who attempted to take the Escobar family out of the country, was located to act as spokesman for the Medellin convicts.

Even Pablo Escobar's wife, Maria Victoria Henao, and their son, Juan Pablo, have been involved in the negotiations.

Days before the summit among the Mafia spokesmen, Maria Victoria and her son visited Escobar's former allies at La Picota, on behalf of the search for peace.

At the same time, various documents reveal the internal crisis among Escobar's former allies.

Peace

During a conversation between two prominent Escobar ex-agents, regarding the need for sending spokesmen to negotiate peace with the Cali Cartel, the first of them warned the other: "I tell you one thing, cool guy, we'll have to kneel here (...), or they'll kill us all; and we must at least see to it that the families live...."

Last Wednesday, after the summit among the "capos'" spokesmen in Valle, and at the request for an expansion of the investigation, "Arete" and "El Mugre" met in one of the rooms at the Prosecutor General's Office with two lawyers for the Cali Cartel and its representatives.

High-ranking spokesmen for the Prosecutor General's Office explained that this was no meeting, but rather a hearing on expansion of the investigation. However, EL TIEMPO spoke with attendees at the meeting, who claimed that "Arete" and "El Mugre" had talked for at least three hours with the Valle traffickers' spokesmen, one of them a man identified as Guillermo Angel.

The sources said that an incognito female prosecutor with the surname Aguilar was an exceptional witness at those talks, adding: "The regional director of Prosecutors' Offices in Bogota, Jorge Enrique Bautista, was also present for a short time."

They noted: "Meanwhile, Ana Montes, national director of Prosecutors' Offices, was waiting for the results of the meeting in another room."

As was reported, both "Arete" and "El Mugre" expressed their intention of ceasing the quarrels. "We are tired of fighting," they told the Cali Cartel representatives.

During the meeting, which lasted seven hours, between 1000 and 1700, Pablo Escobar's men declared that they want to change their lives, that they need to get ahead, and that they want to be allowed to live calmly.

Also proposed was the need for helping many young criminals to give up their weapons.

Raids Against Cali Traffickers Increasing

94P20501A Santa Fe de Bogota EL ESPECTADOR in Spanish 26 Feb 94 p 10A

[Text] The commander of the 3d Brigade headquartered in [Cali], General Rafael Hernandez Lopez, said yesterday that over the past six months raids have been carried out in northern, central, and southern Valle del Cauca Department, zones where members of the so-called Cali Cartel operate.

"We have been carrying out four or five raids each day in all those sectors where we believe there are presumed drug traffickers or subversives. What is happening is that now we have intensified them because the intelligence has improved," he added.

According to the general, 11 raids were carried out in Cali yesterday, seven in Palmira, four in Buga, and some others in Popayan and adjoining areas.

He added that in the course of these raids they have seized property, and vehicles, and have entered ranches and houses, but so far no individuals have been arrested.

In Ciudad Jardin neighborhood, in southern Cali, in the past few days various raids have been carried out in which authorities found a building under construction which contained a jacuzzi, gymnasiums, a sauna, and other luxuries.

The identity of the owners and the origin of the money invested in that building are a mystery, and the authorities decided to open an investigation to determine the identity of the owners.

Other sources revealed that among the property seized are armor-plated vehicles, one of which belongs to Fernando Tello Dorronsoro, a Liberal member of the House of Representatives running for reelection in Valle.

Spokespersons for the Prosecutor General's Office said that the vehicle was seized during the raid of a residence presumed to belong to former beauty queen Martha Lucia Echeverri.

With regard to several media reports on Thursday night [24 February] that one of the operations was on the verge of capturing an important Cali Cartel leader, Gen. Hernandez said it was false.

In addition, he said that all of confiscated items as well as "important documents which were being analyzed" will be turned over to the Regional Prosecutor General's Office which is conducting the investigation.

A Strike in Bogota

In other news, a band of criminals which supposedly tried to sell information processing equipment to the Cali Cartel was dismantled last Thursday in Bogota by the Judicial and Investigative Police whose units captured four of the members.

The operation took place at the intersection of calle 60 and highway 17, in the Chapiero district, and the following items were seized: 47 Minitelt data processing units (video, textual), four Hewlett Packard monitors; sixty cartridges of various calibers, and one piece of sound equipment.

According to preliminary investigations, the subjects had contacts with the above-mentioned drug trafficking group and their activities were discovered by an undercover agent and through laborious intelligence work.

The four arrested were Salomon Gonzalez Garcia, Eduardo Hurtado Galvis, Luis Daniel Parra Munoz, and Jose Maria Larrea Corredor.

'Massive' Surrender by Cali Cartel Ruled Out

PA1603043494 Mexico City NOTIMEX in Spanish 0930 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 15 Mar (NOTIMEX)—Colombian Attorney General Carlos Gustavo Arrieta has ruled out a massive surrender by the Cali Cartel chiefs after one of the Mafia chiefs surrendered to justice last Saturday. The official considers the surrender of Julio Fabio Urdinola Grajales who last Saturday turned himself in to one of the representatives of the Office of the Prosecutor General in Palmira, some 400 km southwest of Bogota, to be "an isolated case." Arrieta reiterated: "I do not think that the most powerful members of the Cali Cartel are about to surrender to justice."

Late in 1993 the lawyers of the powerful Cali Cartel began to contact Colombian justice officials to negotiate the cartel members' surrender in exchange for legal benefits such as a reduction in sentences and house arrests, but the government rejected this. Arrieta said that the remodeling work being done in the Palmira jail is almost finished, and this is where the leaders of the organization responsible for 80 percent of the cocaine shipments to the United States will be sent. He mentioned that Urdinola "is not an important man" within the cartel and that the authorities were fully aware of his "desperate plans" to surrender to justice.

According to the Colombian media quoting reports from state security organizations, the surrender of important Cali Cartel members—including leader Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela—is imminent.

De Greiff Rebukes U.S. Attorney General Reno

PA1603024294 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0000 GMT 16 Mar 94

[From the "24 Hours Newscast," report by Alvaro Ayala]

[Text] Colombian Prosecutor General Gustavo de Greiff got tired of U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno's accusations and today told her that Colombia does not accept foreign pressure when making legal decisions because it is a sovereign state. Alvaro Ayala reports.

[Ayala] U.S. Attorney General Reno told de Greiff: I am increasingly concerned by the fact that in your correspondence you do not include information on the process of conversations with the chieftains of the Cali Cartel and because you have not mentioned that the Prosecutor General's Office plans to prosecute and put those chieftains on trial. These omissions are what create the environment of distrust you mention in your letters.

Today the prosecutor general reacted and reminded his U.S. counterpart, Janet Reno, that in Colombia the judicial system functions independently, without bending to foreign pressure.

[Begin de Greiff recording] Colombia's Judicial Branch cannot be subjected to the evaluations Ms. Reno may want to pass on the evidence they supply. Cooperation is fine, but impositions are not. [end recording]

The prosecutor general said that on 20 June he will be 65 and that his remaining in his post depends on the Supreme Court of Justice. He said that personally he would like to complete the four-year period for which he was elected.

The Supreme Court of Justice, the High Council of the Judiciary, and a U.S. court adviser, have stated their support for de Greiff.

William Davis is an important U.S. court adviser. He is in Colombia participating in a seminar on court backlogs organized by the High Council of the Judiciary. He spoke at the seminar with journalists and spoke out in defense of Prosecutor General de Greiff, saying that the institution de Greiff heads is too new to have to endure the strong criticism of the U.S. attorney general.

[Begin Davis recording] I said: Look, these things take five years and they are complex. We live in a world where people expect results in a matter of months, weeks, or days instead of years. [end recording]

The Judicial Branch stated its support for the independence of the Prosecutor General's Office and not only criticized Ms. Reno's intrusion but also the Colombian Security Council's decision to reject the transfer of five Medellin Cartel members from Bogota to Itagui.

[Begin recording] [Justice Pablo Caceres] Other countries cannot expect the autonomy of the Prosecutor General's Office to depend on their opinions.

[Justice Ricardo Calvete] If the Prosecutor General's Office finds that these people's due process and their right to a defense must be guaranteed, then ways must be found to strictly comply with this. [end recording]

Deficiencies in Prosecutor General's Office Viewed

94SM0252A Santa Fe de Bogota EL TIEMPO in Spanish 17 Feb 94 p 11A

[Text] At a strictly confidential academic conference yesterday, high-ranking officials of the Prosecutor General's Office and representatives of the Criminal Bar Association discussed the problems that plague the Prosecutor General's Office.

With regard to operations and administration, the analysis was conclusive: Proceedings for taking witness testimony are handled inadequately, there is no proper training in questioning techniques, there are not enough investigators to back up prosecuting attorneys, there is a lack of timely information on prosecutions, and serious deficiencies in the preliminary investigation units mean that cases may remain in the initial inquiry stage for months.

In a conciliatory tone, Deputy Prosecutor General Francisco Sintura, Bogota Regional Prosecutor's Office Director Jorge Enrique Bautista, Bogota Sectional Prosecutor's Office Director Jose Haxel de la Pava, Bogota Technical Corps Director Luis Fernando Velez, and trial attorneys studied the problems and pledged to seek solutions.

First, the prosecution officials gathered at the Educational Extension Center of Colombia heard complaints aired by the attorneys, led by criminal law specialist Antonio Cancino. They acknowledged that the problems stem from the lack of trained personnel and the failure to realize that there is a new accusatory system in place in Colombia.

These were the main topics of discussion yesterday.

Questioning Witnesses

The trial attorneys claimed that the proceedings for taking witness testimony are almost never conducted by a prosecuting attorney, and they complained that even though the proceedings should be regarded as a single process, each session is conducted by a different clerk.

Thus, if five witnesses are to testify in a case, each one is heard by a different official, and often that official does not know the background of the case. As a result, according to the trial attorneys, some incongruous decisions can be made.

In some cases, the attorneys alleged, the person who is supposed to do the questioning ends up asking the witness to give a narrative of the case. "Many officials say to the witness, 'Tell me something about the case so I can ask you questions,' and consequently, when the prosecuting attorney reads the transcript, he finds holes and anomalies that he must clear up by calling in the witness again and taking his testimony personally."

Preliminary Proceedings

"With the advent of the Prosecutor General's Office, everything became a preliminary proceeding. Now, even when there is a known suspect, the prosecutors begin the process as if they were still in the inquiry stage, with no suspects. They take up to six months to go through preliminary proceedings before they finally decide that there is enough evidence to file charges against the suspect."

This assertion by a criminal attorney reveals that there is a crisis in the operation of the Preliminary and Permanent Investigation Units. According to the attorneys, many investigations are carried out almost entirely in these units, and then by the time charges are filed and an attempt is made to find the suspect, he has already fled.

A prosecutor in the Bogota special unit acknowledged that he has discovered a very common error in this preliminary investigation unit, and that is the opening of an investigation without sufficient evidence against the accused.

"In this case, the opposite of what the attorneys are complaining about occurs," he said. "Sometimes the prosecuting attorneys in the preliminary investigation unit decide that because the victim was able to name the suspect, he has to be called in for questioning, and of course formal charges have to be filed, when in fact they have not checked to see if this is an unfounded accusation."

Clerks

The trial attorneys revealed that a high percentage of the 1,030 attorneys surveyed by the Bar Association believe that the new Common Clerk's Office is a failure.

These clerk's offices, which are part of the new structure of the Prosecutor General's Office, consist of an executive clerk and several deputy clerks whose job is to handle the administration of case files: filings, notices, etc.

These offices, complain the attorneys, have turned the prosecuting attorneys into "faceless bureaucrats," because everything related to a prosecution is discussed with the clerks, who are generally not familiar with the facts of the case.

The attorneys also complained about problems created by the inadequate organization of cases. Thus, they explained, to find a case file at a Common Clerk's Office, it is necessary to have three numbers: the internal reference number, the unit case number, and the assignment office intake number.

In addition, the attorneys say, some employees at the clerk's office are very rude at times. "The issue of the clerk's offices," said spokesmen for the trial attorneys, "is the sticking point in the Prosecutor General's Office. And we are the only ones who are aware of that, since we are on the other side of the railing."

As for the Regional Prosecutor's Offices, which are responsible for drug trafficking and terrorism cases, the criticism focused on poor initial processing of cases. According to the attorneys—and this was acknowledged by the Prosecutor General's Office—many cases are poorly identified in the system. Sometimes, only the first defendant's name appears, and codefendants are listed as "others" in the files. As a result, trying to find the case file for one of those "others" can be a Herculean task.

The Technical Investigation Corps

With regard to the Technical Investigation Corps (CTI), the attorneys noted that it is a subdivision of the Prosecutor General's Office that has very limited technical, human, and financial resources to meet the needs of the prosecutors and of the investigations that are carried out all over the country.

The trial attorneys complained that the Prosecutor General's Office has issued a directive instructing prosecutors to use only the services of CTI agents whenever possible.

Nevertheless, the shortage of personnel makes this almost impossible. In Bogota, for example, there are 59 investigators working on all the prosecution cases under way in the 317 Departmental Prosecutor's Offices.

[Box, p 11A]

Prosecutor General's Office Responds

The representatives of the Prosecutor General's Office who participated in the debate welcomed the criminal attorneys' proposals and admitted that there are errors that must be corrected immediately.

Deputy Prosecutor General Francisco Jose Sintura stated that there is a great shortage of Judicial Police investigators, not only in the CTI, but also in the National Police and the Administrative Department of Security (DAS). For now, however, the government has said that no new positions can be created until 1995.

The official admitted that there are very few employees trained in the techniques of questioning witnesses. "Sometimes," he said, "the questioner asks the witness two or three very simple questions and then asks him if he has anything more to add, just because he has to close the proceeding."

He went on to say that total quality courses have already been implemented so that employees of the Prosecutor General's Office can begin training.

As for the problems in the Common Clerk's Offices, the deputy prosecutor general stated that in the next few days, a pilot program will begin in the clerk's offices. This program, called Plan Chrysalis, includes the completion of a data processing system, as the current system is inadequate.

In this regard, the director of the Regional Prosecutor's Office of Bogota, Jorge Enrique Bautista, said that there have been data processing problems in the regional prosecutor's offices since the beginning, and as a result, it is often difficult to find case files or to determine the status of a case. He noted, however, that a new system is being devised under the auspices of the Social Studies Front (FES).

Referring to the problems of incompetence or irregularities committed by employees, Sintura urged the trial attorneys to file complaints with the Treasury Inspector's Office so that those responsible can be identified and punished.

Samper To Be Proclaimed Presidential Candidate

PA1503120894 Madrid EFE in Spanish 2315 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 14 Mar (EFE)—The National Civil Registry Office has reported that the nomination of former [Economic Development] Minister Ernesto Samper Pizano as the official presidential candidate of the governing Liberal Party of Colombia for the 8 May elections was consolidated today after the counting of 89 percent of the party votes cast on Sunday [13 March].

With its latest communique, the election organization considered the counting of votes cast by Liberal Party members in response to the "internal primary" carried out by the party during the parliamentary elections to be concluded. The primary was independent of the parliamentary elections and was made upon a request from the party's board of directors.

Out of 2,562,694 votes counted, the 43-year-old Samper, a former ambassador to Spain, obtained 1,245,283. Humberto de la Calle, who was government minister until two years ago, concurring with the period when Samper was development minister, followed with 335,165 votes.

Samper Pizano, one of the seven presidential hopefuls who participated in the "internal primary," will be officially proclaimed party candidate on Friday during the celebration of the party's national convention in Santa Fe de Bogota.

In May the Liberal Party candidate will compete with 10 other candidates from the various political parties who want to replace President Cesar Gaviria as president of Colombia on 7 August for the 1994-1998 period. Polls show Samper and Andres Pastrana, of the Social Conservative Party, as the people's favorites.

National Registrar Luis Camilo Osorio explained today that his office will not issue any more bulletins on the votes for the liberal candidates because he has much work to do with the final count of the votes for the Senate and the Chamber of Representatives.

During Sunday's elections, in addition to absenteeism of 70 percent, 14 percent of the votes were either void or

blank. Osorio has attributed this to the cumbersome ballots that contained more than 5,300 names of candidates to the Senate and the Chamber of Representatives.

Liberal Party voting:

	Votes	Percentage
Ernesto Samper	1,245,283	48.2
Humberto De la Calle	335,165	12.9
Carlos Lleras de la Fuente	202,925	7.85
David Turbay	172,096	6.66
Carlos Lemos Simmonds	129,283	5.03
Rodolfo Gonzalez	72,573	2.80
Gloria Gaitan	65,456	2.53
Blank votes	160,751	6.22
Voided votes	198,472	7.68
Total	2,562,694[as received]	

Election Abstention Rate Reported at 68 Percent

PA1503190594 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 0000 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Report by Javier Dario Restrepo from the "24 Hours Newscast"]

[Text] People did not come out to vote yesterday the way they have in the last 15 years despite the fact there were over 600 campaigns seeking votes. All the politicians' machinery proved ineffective when it came to getting voters motivated.

[Begin recording] [unidentified person] I do not care if I did not vote.

[Unidentified reporter] Don't you care?

[Unidentified person] No. [end recording]

This woman was part of the 68 percent of the population who did not vote. If yesterday's elections are compared to those in the last 15 years, they represent a setback in voter turnout. From 4 million voters in 1978, we went to 5.5 million in 1982, nearly 7 million in 1986, over 7.5 million in 1990, and back to 5.5 million yesterday. Political expert Hernando Gomez Buendia commented on this phenomenon.

[Begin Buendia recording] A high voter turnout is very dangerous because it signifies there is a big conflict and people feel threatened by a very serious decision to be made. It is normal to have a high abstention rate. In parliamentary elections in Colombia, Sunday's figure is not disastrous. [end recording]

In addition, few people voted yesterday because the Congress' image does not excite people. There is no faith in parties either; the ballots were confusing to many people, and it rained. Given these reasons, yesterday's election was not seen as a classical game of politics—a games that fill the public stadiums—but as a game played in the Olaya Stadium.

Departments Said To Lack Representation

PA1503211294 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 15 Mar 94

[From the "National Newscast"]

[Text] The Senate election left a large part of the country's poor and neglected portions with no voice at all: Putumayo, Caqueta, Guaviare, Choco, Vaupes, Amazonas, Guainia, Vichada, Casanare, Arauca, Meta, and Quindio. Meta has Senator Jorge Ariel Infante, and Quindio has Samuel Grisales.

At the Chamber of Representatives, the dark spots are Amazonas, which lost Milquesedec Lopez and Jairo Jose Ruiz Medina, Guainia, which lost the seat of Guillermo Britto, and Vaupes, which had Alfonso Gonzalez Vargas. These last three departments are in a serious situation, if one considers the fact they were completely erased from the parliamentary map; this shows how the struggle among the traditional politicians to get votes from all over the country—thanks to the nationwide electoral conscription—does not always work out, silencing regions that have always been forgotten by the state.

Minister Pardo Rejects Charges Against Armed Forces

PA1503223894 Santa Fe de Bogota Inravision Television Cadena 1 in Spanish 1730 GMT 15 Mar 94

[Interview with Defense Minister Rafael Pardo by Sandra Vergara in Santa Fe de Bogota on 15 January; from the "National Newscast"—recorded]

[Text] A short while ago I spoke with Defense Minister Rafael Pardo. He reacted to a report that Amnesty International has just released in which it directly accuses the Colombian Armed Forces of committing most of the political crimes and social cleansing homicides in Colombia.

[Begin recording] [Pardo] The statistics are being manipulated. They cited a number of facts and events and accused the military forces of committing crimes that have not been tried and for which no sentencing has been handed down. With ill intention they mentioned these cases. They claim that the military forces are involved. This is evidently highly ill-intentioned.

[Vergara] That report suggests that the Armed Forces are working with paramilitary forces or that they are allied with the death squads.

[Pardo] I repeat, I know nothing about that report. We will react to it as soon as we know about it. The claim that there is an alliance between military forces and

paramilitary groups is absolutely false. Paramilitary groups are not our allies. In fact, the Colombian military forces pursue them. [end recording]

Communications Minister To Resign 'Soon'

PA1603025094 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0114 GMT 16 Mar 94

[Text] Santa Fe de Bogota, 15 Mar (EFE)—Colombian Communications Minister William Jaramillo Gomez today announced that he will soon tender his resignation to President Cesar Gaviria.

Jaramillo Gomez, Liberal Party member, minister since May 1992, and a former ambassador to Spain, made the announcement at a National Newspaper Association, ANDIARIOS, meeting in Santa Fe de Bogota today. He is the third communications minister since Gaviria assumed office on 7 August 1990.

He was preceded by advertising agent Alberto Casas Santamaria, currently ambassador to Venezuela, who held the post from August 1990 to November 1991, and journalist Mauricio Vargas Linares, who held it from November 1991 to May 1992. Jaramillo Gomez is a former mayor of Medellin.

Jaramillo Gomez hinted that he intends to resign because he plans to accept a nomination as candidate for governor of Antioquia, his native department, located in the country's northwest, in the coming October elections.

After last Sunday's legislative elections, political circles anticipate the resignations of Government Minister Fabio Villegas and Foreign Trade Minister Juan Manuel Santos, both Liberal Party members, in what could be Gaviria's last crisis before he steps down on 7 August.

Villegas and Santos will participate in Liberal Party candidate Ernesto Samper's campaign, according to political sources. Samper, former economic development minister and former ambassador to Spain—this is precisely where he succeeded Jaramillo Gomez—on Sunday was elected the official Liberal Party candidate with 48.21 percent of the party votes, defeating six rivals.

In the first round of the elections, to be held on 8 May, Samper will contend for the Presidency of Colombia for the 1994-1998 term with Conservative Party candidate Andres Pastrana Arango.

Ecuador

Government To Appeal TSE Rejection of Plebiscite Request

PA1603041494 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0134 GMT 16 Mar 94

[Text] Quito, 15 Mar (EFE)—The Ecuadoran Government on 15 March announced that it will appeal before all legal bodies the decision of the Supreme Electoral Tribunal [TSE] to not hold a plebiscite on 1 May on constitutional issues requested by President Sixto Duran-Ballen.

Carlos Larreategui, minister secretary general of public administration, made this announcement and pointed out that the TSE's decision is "an attack on democracy" stemming from a "conspiracy" of the electoral interests of two opposition parties, namely the Social Christian Party (PSC) and the Democratic Left (ID).

In the first public reaction by a government official after the TSE decision was revealed, Larreategui said that President Duran-Ballen, who is touring Japan and China, will address his compatriots on 16 March from Tokyo on the decision made by the top electoral tribunal.

Vice President Alberto Dahik, the acting chief of state, is meeting with several ministers and other officials to discuss the situation.

The plebiscite requested by Duran-Ballen sought to consult Ecuadorans on the reelection of the president and other public officials, which is currently banned by the Constitution, and also on the term of the mandate and the powers that parliament members should have, among other issues.

Paraguay

'I Will Never Resign,' President Says

PY1603005994 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 15 Mar 94 p 10

[Text] Sao Paulo—"I will never resign," President Juan Carlos Wasmosy stressed when it was mentioned to him that there are groups asking that he and Vice President Angel Roberto Seifart resign for what the groups believe is their responsibility in a bad administration. Asked why he preferred to be in Brazil when there was a tense situation in Paraguay, Wasmosy said that what is happening in Paraguay is simply demagogic populism.

The president said that all social groups have the right to petition for whatever they please, adding that he would never resign his post. Then, he ironically told journalists that they themselves could also ask for his resignation.

"We are living in a democracy, and I would not like to intervene in this game of demagogic populism. I am here today because these people have fulfilled something they promised me they would do. In October they will again do something I requested, which will benefit us all and will reduce production costs," Wasmosy said in justifying his presence at the ceremony to inaugurate the interconnection between the Tiete and Parana Rivers in Sao Paulo State. Asked about Cadelpa's [Paraguayan Cotton Chamber] position, Wasmosy said we should not attack the association excessively because it has always cooperated with the government and peasants. The president then outlined Cadelpa's efforts in favor of a

successful cotton harvest year and used almost the same words used by Cadelpa to explain the meaning of the documents seized and aired by the CBII [Congressional Investigating Committee on Illegal Activities].

Peasants March on Congress Despite 'Obstacles'

PY1603005794 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 15 Mar 94 pp 2, 3

[Text] The many government obstacles and maneuvers did not prevent the success of the peaceful march carried out by peasants this morning in the capital to demand a better price for cotton, the review of the government policy on land distribution, and assistance for rural settlements.

The demonstration of community spirit shown by the peasants did not, however, have President Juan Carlos Wasmosy as a witness, who early this morning left for Brazil with Bolivian President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada to attend the inauguration of a navigation sluice.

That ceremony was not even attended by Brazilian President Itamar Franco. Wasmosy's activity was labeled inappropriate and irresponsible by peasant leaders.

Since last night, the government had ordered strict control on all roads of all vehicles carrying people to Asuncion. The National Police and the Highway Patrol even halted trucks at the toll stations in Coronel Oviedo, Carapegua, Tacuara, and San Jose de los Arroyos.

The Public Works and Communications Ministry also revived an old 1948 decree, which was never enforced, that prohibits carrying people in cargo trucks.

The machinery of that ministry and companies under government contracts also obstructed the free movement of vehicles by the Yhaguy River near Itacurubi de la Cordillera. In this regard, the alleged participation of the Public Works and Communications Ministry in the assembly of "tire busters" (nails to flatten tires) made members of Congress intervene.

The march, without precedent in our country's history, gathered thousands of peasants from different parts of the country in front of the Congress building. The largest group gathered at the Metropolitan Seminary's facilities on Kubitschek and 25 de Mayo Avenues, from where they left to gather in front of Congress.

By this paper's publication deadline [ULTIMA HORA is an afternoon newspaper], no incidents of any kind had been reported in the country. Strong security was seen mainly in Asuncion and around Congress.

The police forces were supported by Armed Forces members in combat uniforms who were located at strategic points. Helicopters also flew over the city.

The demonstrators came to the city in different kinds of vehicles in the face of the obstacles created by bus owners. The peasants' mobilization was supported by high school and university students and labor unions. The political parties and movements only made an appeal to their followers to support the mobilization.

At the same time the mobilization in the capital was taking place, agricultural organizations closed Highway 6 near kilometer 143 at the Santa Clara crossing, the highway to Hernandarias at kilometer 4 (with the support of student groups), and the road to Villeta. In Carapegua, the peasants who were forced to get out of trucks decided to block Route 1 for about two hours. The need to have their demands heard by the government made many peasants walk 25 km (this happened in the General Resquin area).

Brazil's Press Surprised by Wasmosy's Visit

PY1603001494 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 15 Mar 94 p 11

[Article by "special correspondent" Gloria Rolon]

[Excerpt] Sao Paulo—Of the five presidents invited for the inauguration of the Tiete and Parana Rivers interconnection, only Bolivian President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada and Paraguayan President Juan Carlos Wasmosy arrived at this city this morning to travel to the work area. The Brazilian press expressed surprise at Wasmosy's presence during this time of social agitation in our country. Presidents Carlos Menem of Argentine, Luis Alberto Lacalle of Uruguay, and Itamar Franco himself considered the inauguration of minor importance and excused themselves from attending with the Sao Paulo governor, giving scheduling as their reason. The presidents of Paraguay and Bolivia are the only presidents who will be present at this afternoon's ceremony. [passage omitted]

Wasmosy Appeals for Moderation

PY1503231494 Asuncion ULTIMA HORA in Spanish 15 Mar 94 p 12

[Text] The very tense situation affecting the country and the mobilizations at the national level forced President Juan Carlos Wasmosy to deliver a speech that, according to various groups, provided nothing for solving the serious problems affecting our country. He did not even refer to the main issue (the price of cotton) that made peasants decide to march today.

Wasmosy made several promises when he said his government is already "promoting solutions to the unjust structure of land possession and ownership as shown by the latest agricultural census: the drop in production of basic agricultural products, distorted credit coverage, and the limitations of technical assistance." He labeled as an achievement the implementation of economic measures aimed at ensuring producers access to appropriate and fair credits, and to technical assistance adjusted to our needs.

In relation to the promises made, he said: "The executive branch proposes a policy of expropriation of unproductive land; therefore, it will ask Congress for the creation of a bicameral committee to establish the necessary legal regulations. Also the reorganization of public administration to end corruption and impunity, which is something we are doing that will be expedited." [sentence fragment as published]

He added that within 90 days, in consultation with the involved groups, the general guidelines for a medium- and long-range action plan will be adjusted to determine measures in two main areas: A) the national agricultural policy and B) reforms of the institutions in charge of agriculture within the framework of state reform.

President Wasmosy strongly defended dialogue as the mechanism for solving the current crisis, and within this context he said the Coordination Council for Social Development is one more testimony that the doors of dialogue are and will remain open as a commitment to consolidating democracy.

Wasmosy also made several appeals. He appealed to all sectors of the population to act with moderation, calm, talent, and great responsibility. He also appealed "to agricultural exporters, industrialists, and the middlemen to become more active in the national effort to give the rural sector better conditions, and especially to contribute with preferential treatment for those producers who have not yet achieved adequate production and to pay the highest price for products in accordance with market rules.

Wasmosy also said: "The many problems inherited by this democracy shows a serious picture that we are identifying with the firm decision to find the appropriate solutions without falling into the deceiving demagogic and populist formulas of very sad memories of the past.

Wasmosy also said: We cannot ignore that we are in a difficult political, economic, and social situation caused by our internal limitations and by the demands of the new international situation that have a direct impact on the population, especially those linked to the economy's weakest sector.

Congressmen Said 'Under Surveillance' by Police

PY1503152194 Asuncion NOTICIAS in Spanish 13 Mar 94 pp 10, 11

[Text] Yesterday Francisco Jose de Vargas, president of the Chamber of Deputies, confirmed that some time ago several legislators were informed that they were under the surveillance of the police that guard the Congress building. De Vargas disclosed that he held a meeting with Interior Minister Carlos Podesta on 11 March to ask him for an explanation, but that the minister told him he knew nothing about it. Now, in view of this unusual "espionage," the deputies will form a special commission to carry out an investigation designed to establish who is responsible for this practice.

In view of the discovery of a small espionage cell discreetly established by the police in Congress, according to confirmed data, the president of the Chamber of Deputies yesterday announced that tomorrow a commission formed by three deputies will be established to investigate the reports on espionage made some days ago.

Yesterday De Vargas confirmed that some days ago legislators were warned that their steps and visits were being closely followed by the police who guard the Congress building. Tomorrow the legislators will start questioning the police posted in Congress to find out why the National Police were asking for documents from Congress.

De Vargas explained that "as far as I know, people arriving at the Chamber of Deputies were checked for safety reasons. But on Friday afternoon I learned that the police officers made lists, which were then classified in a list of those who visited me, those who visited the president of the Senate (Evelio Fernandez), and another with those who visited the vice presidents."

"According to the information I obtained, the lists were then sent, separately or together, to the office of the chief of police," said de Vargas.

"Once I learned about this I tried to get in touch with National Chief of Police (Mario Sapriza) to ask him that this practice be suspended immediately, if it was in effect being used. I was not able to find him. I phoned the interior minister (Carlos Podesta), and told him I had just learned that the legislators were under surveillance, in the sense that the names and identity card numbers of our visitors were being supplied to the chief of police."

De Vargas ended: "I told the minister that if the police were willing to continue to guard Congress they should do just that, but if not they should leave and we would hire private security services."

Clergy Issue Communique Supporting Poorest Sectors

PY1503142194 Asuncion ABC COLOR in Spanish 11 Mar 94 p 2

[Text] During a meeting yesterday to assess the current situation in Paraguay, the Paraguayan Bishops Conference [CEP] and the Confederation of Paraguayan Clergy [Confederacion de Religiosos del Paraguay—Conferpar] urged the public to assume an effective commitment to national unity, through a moralization campaign, so as to be able face the socioeconomic crisis the country is experiencing. Moreover, the communique states that although a democratic process has started, the government has still not managed to set up a socioeconomic structure that will benefit the weakest.

During the CEP-Conferpar meeting held in Ypacarai yesterday, the bishops, priests, and nuns issued a communique voicing the need for effective commitment to

national unity through a moralization campaign, so to be able to face the socioeconomic crisis the country is suffering through.

The communique issued by the religious group maintains that they welcome "with happiness" a democratic regime that, among other things, made it possible to win public liberties. It notes, however, that this is not the case in the socioeconomic field, which is "marked by a series of factors and by an economic policy in which the social aspect has not been taken into account, and which encourages the defense of individual interests to the detriment of the common well-being."

It then adds that, "sadly," one can witness every day the growing deterioration in the country's socioeconomic situation, and especially the situation of peasants, workers, and the poor, "who are the most affected, and continue to be denied the benefits to which they are entitled by law. This situation is even worse in the case of the indigenous communities."

The clergy maintain that the solution to social problems cannot be found through violence and government repression against these sectors of society. In this regard they explain that the solutions will be found within a framework of dialogue and freedom, where none of the sectors resort to the use of force.

The communique goes on to state "that we have also seen that privileged people and groups have distorted the moral values by means of a way of life based on moral, psychological, administrative, political, and juridical corruption, which is reflected among other ways in the deficient administration of justice, and in the lack of essential health, education, and housing services."

In view of this panorama of progressive impoverishment of the people the clergy reasserted their "preferential treatment of the poor," expressing solidarity and support for the initiatives taken for the sake of the common well-being, seeking "a fair distribution of assets, a broad land reform policy, aid and organization for peasant settlements, fair prices for agricultural products, the recovery of ill-begotten property, salaries commensurate with the cost of living, and the fair demands of workers and peasants, who have a right to use nonviolent means in their search for a more dignified life."

The communique also states that, taking into account the social situation prevailing in the country, the national citizenry must assume the commitment through a moralization campaign to face the socioeconomic crisis we are enduring.

Peru

Labor Minister Criticizes Unions' Request for U.S. Trade Sanctions

PY1603024194 Lima EL PERUANO in Spanish 7 Mar 94 p A3

[Excerpts] Peruvian union leaders have systematically raised charges before international labor organizations since 1990 for the only purpose of curtailing international economic cooperation with Peru, Labor Minister Augusto Antonioli told EL PERUANO during an exclusive interview.

He said he is a witness to this labor union policy and that he is not surprised at the lack of foundation for the charges made by the Peruvian labor confederations' coordinating board before several organizations like the International Labor Organization (ILO).

Antonioli added that a hypothetical and improbable trade sanction against Peru will not affect at all the leaders of the CGTP [General Confederation of Peruvian Workers] or the CTP [Confederation of Peruvian Workers] who have made these charges because they are not wage earners like the rest of the country's workers.

"The elimination of import tax exemptions by the United States would affect Peruvian workers but not their union leaders," he said.

It must be pointed out that alleged violations of labor rights were not made only during the Clinton administration. Such charges also were made during the last part of the administration of former President Bush when Peruvian union leaders sought to make the United States adopt repressive measures against Peru, but they were never taken into consideration.

The AFL-CIO used to represent to CGTP leaders a symbol of oligarchy, of "Yankee imperialism," but now the CGTP wants this organization to raise charges of alleged labor rights violations. "All this is incredible," Antonioli said. [passage omitted]

Regarding this attitude, Minister Antonioli said: "The current CGTP leaders are not respecting the agreements made between the government and deceased CGTP leader Pedro Huillca Tecse. All the progress we made during the negotiations with him is lost. I do not understand the current union leaders' policy."

As for the observations made by the ILO to the Peruvian Government in the labor field, Antonioli said our country already has given a sound explanation about Peruvian workers' real situation and the labor policy implemented by the administration of President Alberto Fujimori.

"Our labor law has 86 articles and seven complementary, temporary, and final provisions. The ILO has observed 16 articles and some clauses, which means that the rest of the law is correct. The articles that were questioned are exactly those we explained with foundation, clearly establishing their scope," Minister Antonioli said.

Request Surprises CCD President

PY1603014594 Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 10 Mar 94 p A5

[Text] Jaime Yoshiyama, president of the Democratic Constituent Congress [CCD], on 9 March expressed

surprise at the CGTP petition to the United States to impose commercial sanctions against Peru.

Yoshiyama called on CGTP leaders to reconsider the issue and warned that our exports will be blockaded and exporters, workers, and the economy in general will be hurt if the United States imposes sanctions against our country.

"We must act seriously and keep in mind the defense of our national interests. Otherwise Peru might be excluded from the General System of Preferences and that would be very serious," Yoshiyama said.

The CCD president said human rights and the democratic system are respected in our country.

Referring to remarks made by congresswoman Martha Chavez (NM-C90 [New Majority-Change 90]), who characterized the CGTP petition as treason against the fatherland, Yoshiyama said the remarks expressed the legislator's mood and were her personal opinion on the damages that might cause eventual sanctions against our country.

The CCD president stressed that expressing an opinion is not a crime in Peru, adding that anyone can give his opinion freely.

The CGTP report to the United States is not a crime, even though it intends to hurt our country.

Fujimori Discusses Need for Dialogue With Chile

PY1503230594 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1850 GMT 14 Mar 94

[Text] Santiago, 14 Mar (EFE)—During an interview published today by ESTRATEGIA, which specializes in the economy, Peruvian President Alberto Fujimori asserted that Chile and Peru must remove "remnants of the past" and work toward a bilateral dialogue.

The Peruvian president, who was in Chile to attend the inauguration of President Eduardo Frei, said: "What we need is a bit more dialogue and communication and to cast away ultraconservatism and the arms race that have caused so much damage."

Fujimori said Peru has taken concrete steps to create a climate of confidence and has withdrawn "entire battalions" from the Chilean border.

He added: "I do not think border problems will prevent development between the two countries," and reiterated his government's will to negotiate an economic cooperation agreement with Chile.

During the interview Fujimori said: "I believe in the future of the integration process," and that in this sense concrete steps must be taken. "This would be a good step to be taken, and we are willing to do so now that there is a rapprochement with Chile at all levels."

According to Fujimori, the two countries can successfully complement each other in the agro-industrial and metallurgical fields.

During his stay in Santiago, Fujimori and Frei agreed to work on an economic cooperation agreement that will provide for actions in the investments field, and include custom tariff lists and telecommunications and transportation agreements.

Fujimori also disclosed that his country is interested and getting ready to join the Free Trade Agreement (TLC) with the United States.

In his opinion, "our economy now is quite open compared to that of other Latin American countries because we have made a lot progress... We believe that we soon will be fully competitive to join the major blocs."

Fujimori said his government's goals for this year are to reduce inflation to 25 percent and reach economic growth of more than 5 percent. The Peruvian president did not dismiss the possibility of running for reelection but asserted that he will make a decision in this regard next October.

Former Arequipa Mayor To Run for Presidency

PY1503231994 Madrid EFE in Spanish 0322 GMT 12 Mar 94

[Text] Lima, 11 Mar (EFE)—Luis Caceres Velasquez—former mayor of Arequipa, the second-largest city in Peru—today announced his decision to run for the presidency of his country in the 1995 general elections as a candidate for the independent movement "Peru in the Year 2000" [Peru al 2000].

Caceres is the first candidate to officially announce his intention to run for the presidency in next year's presidential and legislative electoral campaign.

The former mayor said he has several names to include on his list of congressional candidates and already has the name of two vice presidents who will run on his presidential ticket. He declined, however, to reveal their names.

He pointed out that everyone is entitled to become a candidate to govern the country and that he is not concerned about the possibility that President Alberto Fujimori, whom the Constitution allows to be reelected, and former UN Secretary General Javier Perez de Cuellar might decide to present their candidacies too.

Fujimori often has reiterated that he still has not thought about the possibility of running for reelection. Nonetheless, opposition members believe he surely will. Perez de Cuellar, however, has recently said it is still too early to decide on a possible candidacy.

Caceres Velasquez was mayor of Arequipa, 1,025 km south of Lima, for two consecutive terms. In the January

1993 municipal elections he was a candidate for mayor of Lima, but another independent candidate—Ricardo Belmont—won.

Roundup of Economic Developments

94P20503A

[Editorial Report] Economy and Finance Minister Jorge Garnet said he is revisiting the 1994 goals stated in the International Monetary Fund loan program for Peru to see if adjustments can be made that would allow more funds to be spent on fighting poverty. He also said that the planned $410 million for social programs in Peru's 1994 budget should be increased. The $410 million equates to only 1 percent of the GDP. Garnet said he will adopt a broad approach to finding monies, including applying for a larger portion of the income from privatizations. Last year's privatizations brought in $526 million and this year's sales of state enterprises are expected to yield $800 million. (Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 18 Feb 94 p B11)

Seven private enterprises have been authorized to offer a full range of national and international postal services for the next five years as concessionaires. This is a direct result of a decree passed in 1991 that abolished the monopoly status of the Peruvian Directorate of Postal Services. The private firms had already been operating as courier services. (Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 16 Feb 94 p A8)

The new mortgage loan mechanism, which will be entirely in private hands, has prompted Vice Minister for Housing and Construction Fernando Ojeda Zanartu to speculate that it could attract $500 million and enable the construction of 50,000 homes this year. This view was echoed by Carlos G. Elias, vice president of the Peruvian Construction Association. They both anticipated that the mortgage system would attract investment by pension funds, banks, and insurance companies. (Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 9 Feb 94 p A9)

A new fishing vessel that is purported to be multipurpose, high-capacity, and low-cost has been developed in Peru. Its designer, Eduardo Rubini, said that the vessel, which has a steel hull, can carry 25 metric tons of fish and will allow for a constant harvest because it has equipment that will allow the fishermen to switch "from tuna to squid." The equipment allows for trawling, dragging, and line fishing, according to Rubini. The vessel is equipped to navigate by satellite, radar, and sonar probing, and costs "about the same as a bus," Rubini said. A total of 16 boats are planned. (Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 20 Feb 94 p A13)

Of 5,000 fishing vessels registered in Peru, 60 percent are obsolete or no longer in use, according to Audberto Morales, head of the Institute for South Pacific Fishing Research. Morales pointed out that as a result, Peruvian fishermen only catch 104,000 metric tons of yellow jack tuna out of a biomass of 5 million metric tons, and similarly only catch 39,000 metric tons of mackerel out of a biomass of 1.3 million metric tons. He added that because of the age and poor condition of the fishing vessels, they spend "more time in repairs than on the job." (Lima EL COMERCIO in Spanish 20 Feb 94 p A13)

Venezuela

Army Discovers Microphones at Miraflores Palace

PA1503214694 Madrid EFE in Spanish 1649 GMT 12 March 94

[Text] Caracas, 12 Mar (EFE)—Members of an Army intelligence unit detected and dismantled a network of concealed microphones at Miraflores Palace, seat of the Venezuelan Government. The Army is now seeking the "brains" of the espionage system, the local press reported today.

Unofficial sources at Miraflores Palace remarked that the microphones had been placed in the main rooms of the building, including the office of President Rafael Caldera and the room where the Council of Ministers meets regularly. Although it has not yet been confirmed, it is believed that, through this high-technology system, those responsible for telephone espionage also had access to the main offices of the Ministry of Defense.

A report published by the daily "EL GLOBO" states the system's connections reportedly linked the network to the private offices of former President Carlos Andres Perez and the main office of Banco Latino, in which the government intervened last January and where a sophisticated espionage center was discovered.

Following the bank intervention, congressional investigators asserted that hundreds of telephones of prominent Venezuelan political and business personalities were wiretapped from that office, but the wires leading to hidden microphones were not discovered.

However, it has not been ruled out that the investigation will follow this course, especially if it is confirmed the network discovered at Miraflores leads to terminals located at the main office of Banco Latino, whose former President Gustavo Gomez Lopez is accused of planning a coup d'etat.

The location of Gomez Lopez, for whom an arrest warrant was issued over the bankruptcy of Banco Latino, is not known. It is only known that he is abroad. However, on several occasions Gomez Lopez has contacted local media to reject the accusations.

Even so, Venezuelan political leaders view Gomez Lopez as the main ideologist of a coup d'etat, planned with former Defense Minister Radames Munoz. This coup attempt was reportedly aimed at preventing the electoral victory of Rafael Caldera last 5 December.

Those who made accusations against Gomez Lopez argue the intentions of the banker and Munoz were definitely foiled after the military officer disclosed his

plans to U.S. Government officials, who warned they would not go along with an attempt against the Venezuelan democratic regime.

Roundup of Economic Developments

PA1503163294

[Editorial Report] The following is a compilation of reports on Venezuelan economic developments monitored through 15 March.

Orinoco Iron and Steel Works, Sidor, and Colombian Steel Works Corporation, Acesco, signed an agreement allowing Sidor to open an office in Bogota. According to Sidor, Colombia is one of the corporation's main sheet metal customers, and "having an office in Bogota will allow Sidor to compete with similar suppliers from Japan and Brazil." Company officials reported that "this agreement is part of the overall economic integration process." (Caracas EL NACIONAL in Spanish 10 Mar 94 p E11)

Overall exports dropped 53.2 percent in January compared with January 1993. The Central Statistics and Data Processing Office, OCEI, reports that exports totalled $414 million. Meanwhile, imports fell 43.3 percent for the same period. Experts said "Venezuela's 1993 economic situation was the worst in recent years." Inflation closed at 50 percent for the year, the bolivar was devaluated 35 percent, and the deficit hit 3 percent of the GNP. (Hamburg DPA in Spanish 0006 GMT 10 Mar 94)

Nontraditional exports to the United States increased 27.6 percent during 1993 while imports fell 8 percent. The Foreign Trade Institute (ICE) and OCEI reported that the United States purchased products worth $746.3 million in 1993, which is 23.1 percent of total Venezuelan nontraditional exports. Imports from the United States dropped about $444.3 million, although such transactions totalled 12.13 percent of Venezuelan exports in general. (Caracas REPORTE DE LA ECONOMIA in Spanish 11 Mar 94 p 15]

Fedecamaras, Venezuelan Federation of Associations and Chambers of Commerce and Industry, has issued its monthly inflation report. The study shows that inflation dropped in February to 1.9 percent, a 55.8 percent decrease from January 1994 and 26.9 percent less than February 1993. The main contributors were home expenditures, clothing, and food and drink. (Caracas EL NACIONAL in Spanish 12 Mar 94 p E10)

Following congressional approval of the Emergency Banking Law, the finance commission approved the Public Credit Bill, which will fund the former. Acting Finance Minister Luis Grisanti said the bill "will not have inflationary effects and will not force the Central Bank of Venezuela to print money without appropriate reserve funds." He stressed the need to restore financial equilibrium, as "solving the financial difficulties of several Venezuelan banks is closely related to the process of restoring trust." He added that "this will in fact bring down inflation, reduce the exchange rate, and cut interest rates." (Caracas Venezolana de Television Network in Spanish 0000 GMT 13 Mar 94)

Nonpetroleum product exports to Andean countries increased in the last five years from $190 million to $862 million. ICE said "this figure is unprecedented in the trade relations among the region's countries." Sales to the Andean countries totaled 10.5 percent of Venezuela's total exports in 1988 and rose to 26.3 percent in 1993. The main items exported to the region are aluminum, urea, cane sugar, polyesters, coal, antibiotics, and other medicines. (Hamburg DPA in Spanish 2241 GMT 14 Mar 94)